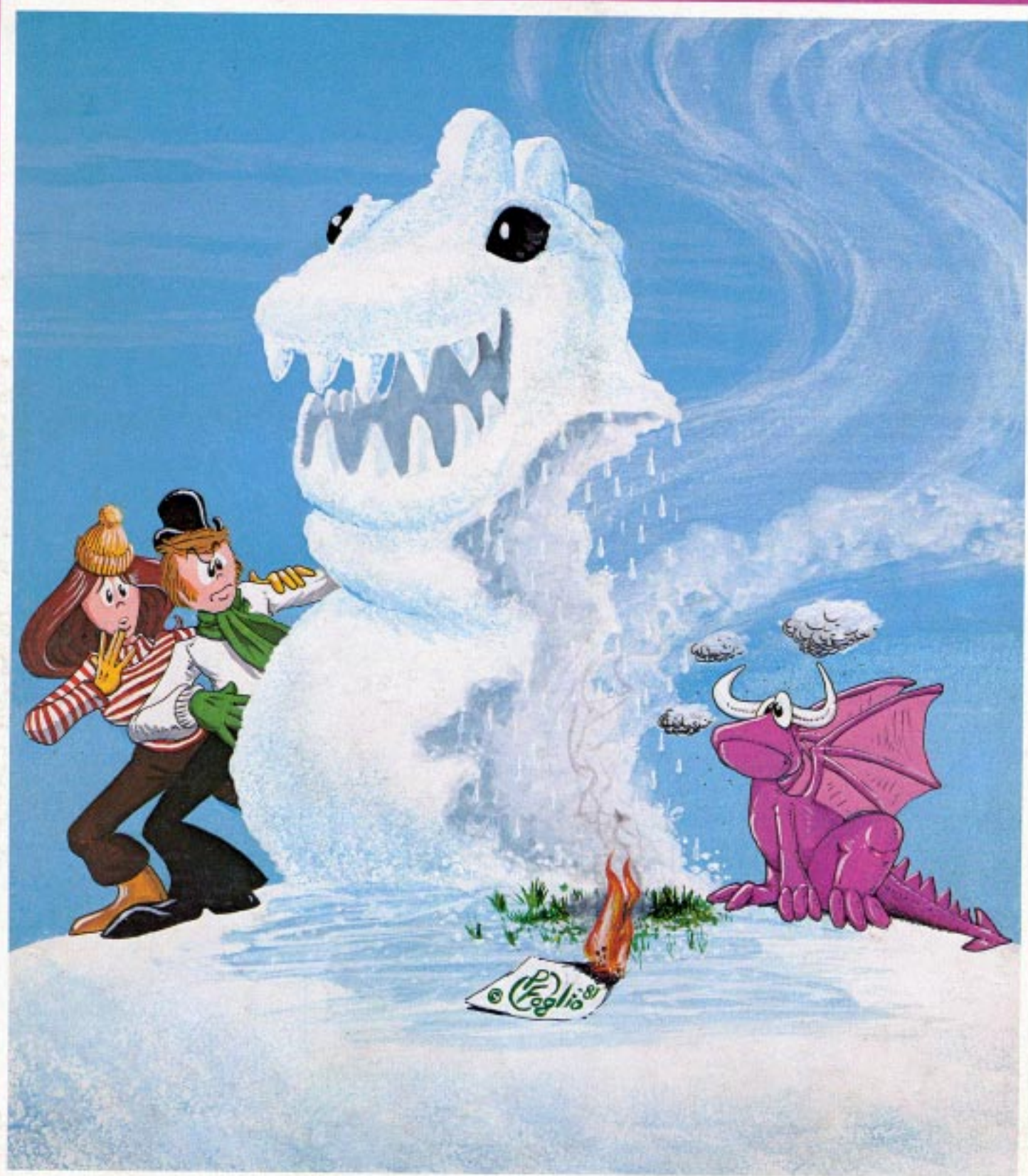


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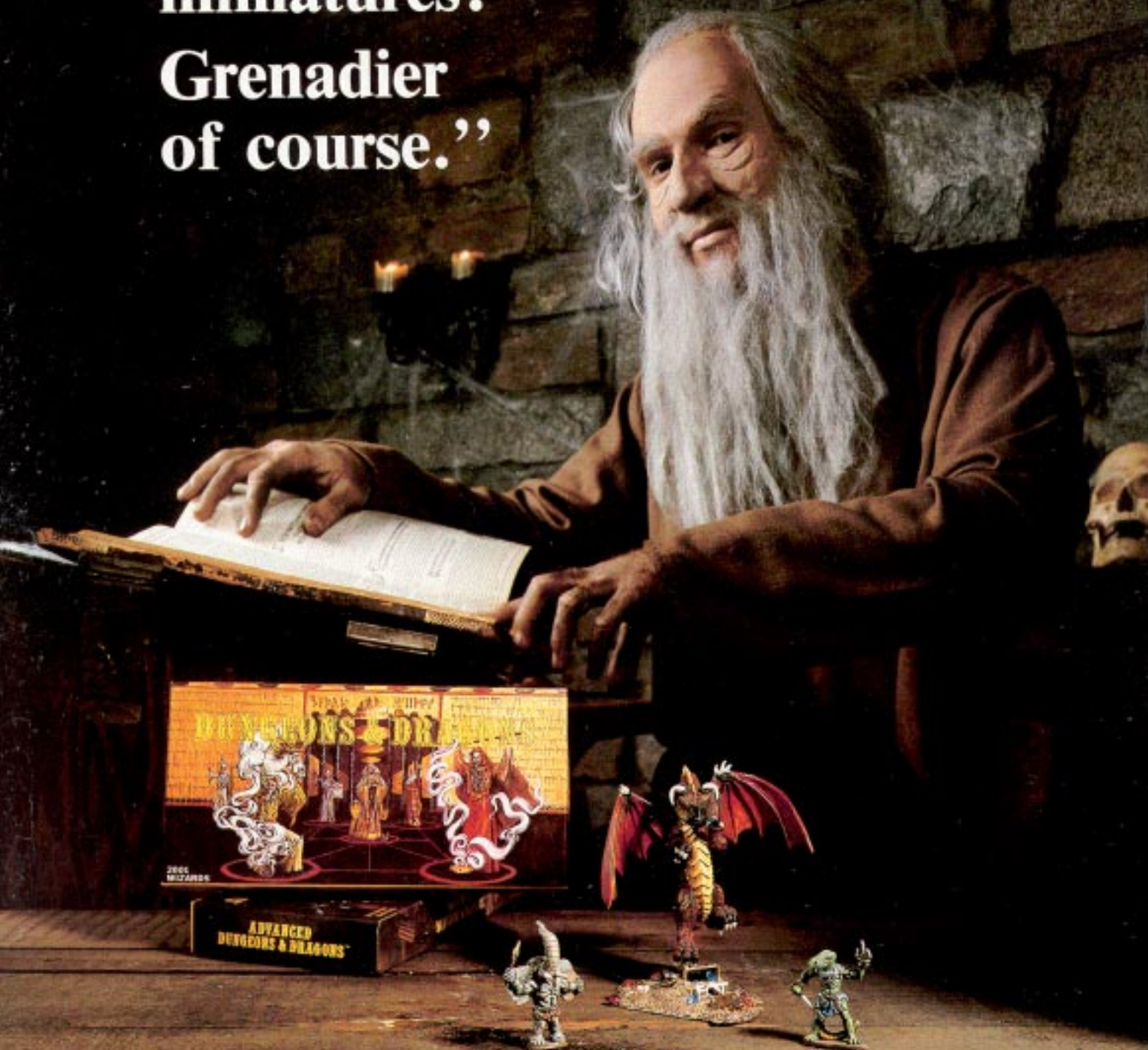
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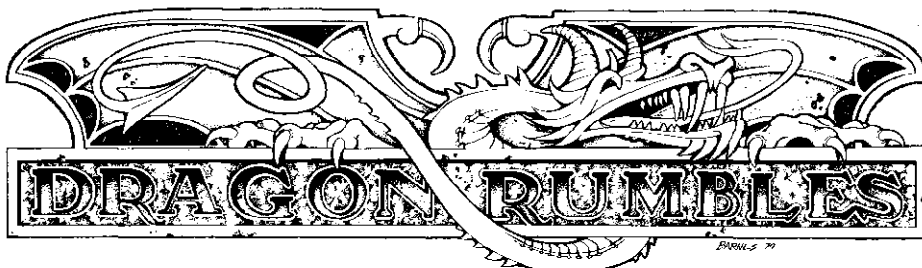
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Included in this month's edition of DRAGON™ magazine you'll find a reader response survey form. While it may seem at times that we ask a lot of you, our readers, in reality the few times that we prevail upon you to send us your opinions and thoughts are only to provide you with a magazine well worth your time to read and your money to purchase.

Some magazines request a monthly feedback response from their readers. While this is a noble attempt to provide a publication that is exactly desired by current readers, it can also be self-defeating. If a majority of readers say they want more of type "x" material, and if the editor/publisher acquiesces to that response (cutting some other aspect of the publication to provide more of type "x" material), then only that majority of the readership is being served. So the minority may quit buying the magazine. So the total readership goes down. Then the next magazine has yet another feedback form. A majority of the now-smaller readership requests more "y" material. So the editor/publisher attempts to serve his audience by devoting more space to topic "y." If this is continued, soon the magazine will only be serving a readership of one.

Obviously, the simple majority of responses to a readership survey cannot be used to dictate the entire contents of any given periodical. However, surveys are useful in that they can communicate the overall desires of the readership, particularly when viewed over a long period of time, and when done in a "correct" manner ("correct" meaning a survey worded in a precise manner, evaluated on a significant sample, etc.). So, we have a survey in this issue.

The last survey we published was in issue #41, well over a year ago, so all of the information we get this time will be "new" to us and, we hope, very useful. We're not asking (necessarily) if you want more material on subject "z"; rather, we want to know where your general interests lie, your gaming habits, and so forth. From this information we hope to be able to provide a publication that gives you even *more* for your money. Notice the word "more." We do not intend to necessarily cut anything from the existing format of DRAGON magazine; rather, we intend to augment it. We know that about a quarter million of you out there read the magazine each month —

and we don't want to lose *any* of you. 'Nuff said.

On page 4 this month you'll see a letter from Jim Dopkin which bears some comment here. Jim has made an assumption that is perhaps all too often made by many readers of DRAGON magazine. While Dragon Publishing is a division of TSR Hobbies, Inc., we are entirely separate from the division that produces and markets TSR™ games. Also, we are financially separate. That means we cannot put out a magazine devoted only to D&D® and AD&D™ games, or even only to TSR products. Some companies put out publications devoted only to their own line of products, be it games or earth-moving equipment. These publications are called "house organs," and many times are at least in part financed by the company they cover.

DRAGON magazine is *not* a house organ. We sell advertising to many different companies advertising many games and game-related products. We run articles on many different games produced by many different companies. If it seems at times like we concentrate on certain games or game companies (for example, TSR Hobbies), it is only because those products have, proven their popularity.

I personally have a great interest in games simulating building railroads (let's hear it for the *Rail Baron™* game and 1829), and I would even pay \$5 an issue to receive such a publication. If anyone cares to take a stab at it, I'll be your first lifetime subscriber. Unfortunately, it will be the life of the publication, not mine. There *are* financial realities to consider, and the potential audience for such an exclusive publication would be so limited as to doom it from the start or, at best, limit it to substandard quality.

The point to all this is that DRAGON magazine is *not* all things to all people, it probably never will be, and anyone that claims a publication to be otherwise is either very optimistic or very foolish. What DRAGON magazine intends to be is *as many things to as many gamers as possible*.

Merry Christmas, and we hope we live up to you what you expect of us.

Dragon™

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Ap in the land where DRAGON™ magazine is born anew each month, it's wintertime again. But in the middle of this issue of the world's warmest gaming magazine, there's nothing but palm trees and sunshine. Well... almost nothing. There's a funny-looking island, which is really Alulu, and there's a whole lot of excitement and intrigue ahead for TOP SECRET® agents who take on *MAD MERC*, a 20-page adventure created and developed by Merle Rasmussen (author of the original TOP SECRET rules) and James Thompson (a.k.a. Pong), Merle's sidekick in subterfuge. *MAD MERC* is the longest (20 pages) of the three modules for the TOP SECRET game that we've published, and it's the first agents' adventure that has been in these pages since issue #48. Is it the best of the three? We'll leave that to the spies to decide.

You'll run into Phil Foglio no matter which end you start from this month. Besides providing our cover painting, which Phil titled "The Critic," he also fills the last page on the inside of the magazine — a snazzy, seasonal "What's New©" which is presented in color for the first time on page 80.

This month's feature section is anchored by an in-depth look at the AD&D™ bard class; it's tough to *be* one, but even tougher to *beat* one. "Singing a new tune" is our title for Jeff Goelz's collection of suggestions on how the class could be redesigned. Also in the section is an article by Bill Howell advocating a new set of "Songs instead of spells" for the bard, and a Sage Advice column containing all the answers we could find to all the questions you could think to ask about bards.

The bard articles, like almost everything else you'll read in this magazine, are *unofficial* and not intended to be taken as

rule changes, or even recommended rule changes. Something that is official every time it appears is *From the Sorcerer's Scroll*, the column composed by the creator of the AD&D game system, E. Gary Gygax. Gary's latest words of wisdom include official definitions of magic circles and other protection devices, plus a detailed look at the past and present history of the north central section of his own Greyhawk campaign, from which the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ Fantasy World Setting was drawn — "must" reading for anyone running a campaign within the borders of the Flanaess.

Coming up with a logical, sensible, fully detailed map of your campaign area is not an easy task, but it is made much less taxing if you enlist the assistance of none other than the United States government. "Map hazard, not haphazard" is William Hamblin's informative essay on how to obtain topographic maps of the real world and how to put them to good use in gaming.

There's another slice of short fiction inside — "The Doctor," J. Robert Dunkle's unorthodox and somewhat unsettling account of a strange malpractice trial — or maybe malpractice isn't a strong enough word....

In observance of the gift-buying season, we've provided eight pages of review articles to give you some Christmas shopping choices: four assessments of games and game accessories, plus five pages of observations by book reviewer Chris Henderson on what's available to be taken *Off the Shelf*. In observance of your unquenchable appetite for new monsters, there's a trio of new residents in *Dragon's Bestiary*. And in observance of nothing in particular — but well worth observing — is a three-page installment of *Wormy*. Happy holidays! — KM

Contents

SPECIAL ATTRACTION

- MAD MERC: The Alulu Island Mission
A new TOP SECRET® adventure 31

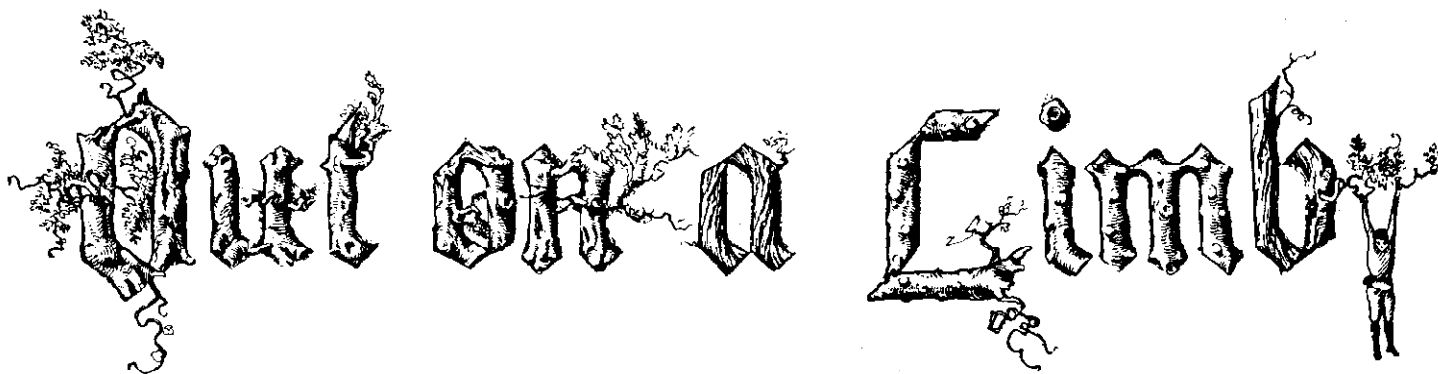
OTHER FEATURES

- Bards: Examining the AD&D™ character class
Singing a new tune — *Redesigning the bard* 5
Sage Advice — *Questions & answers on the class* 9
Songs instead of spells 10
Map hazard, not haphazard — "Real" fantasy maps 12
The Doctor — Fiction by J. Robert Dunkle 52
More treasure for Eric's dragon — *Painting champ* 59

REGULAR OFFERINGS

- Out on a Limb — *Letters from readers* 4
From the Sorcerer's Scroll — *More Greyhawk goodies* 18
Convention calendar 23

- Minarian Legends — *The monsters of Minaria* 25
Figuratively Speaking — *More miniature photos* 58
Dragon's Bestiary
Shroom 60
Colfel 61
Gem Vars 61
Dragon's Augury
Survival/The Barbarian 64
Dawn of the Dead 65
The Argon Gambit/Death Station 66
Fighting Ships 66
Off the Shelf — *Fantasy & SF book reviews* 67
'Tis the season... — *Literary gift suggestions* 69
Simulation Corner — *The philosophy of design* 72
Wormy — *Three colorful pages* 76
Dragon Mirth — *Cartoons* 79
What's New? — *Color, for one thing* 80



'A viable adventurer'

Dear editor:

There is no need to change the monk character class of *ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS*. While there are minor flaws in the class, on the whole the monk is a viable adventurer. Increased hit points and armor class, as proposed by Philip Meyers (issue #53), are designed to make the monk the fighting machine he was not originally intended to be. Rather, the monk could use his limited fighting ability for defense, while using his superior speed, agility, and dexterity as his primary means of adventuring.

Played effectively, the monk can be a very dangerous and formidable opponent. For example, I have a fourth-level monk in one campaign who used his superior speed and agility very destructively in one adventure. The de-

tails are too many to go into here, but the monk managed to single-handedly wipe out a band of orcs and a rampaging dinosaur all in one fell swoop.

Mr. Meyers also states that the abilities of monks, compared on an ability-for-ability basis with other classes, are pitifully weak. This result is bound to be obtained when one considers all of the monk's abilities separately. However, when the many abilities are combined, the monk becomes a deadly opponent to be reckoned with.

Kevin Morgan
Colton, N.Y.

'Sorely needed'

Dear editor:

I've been playing AD&D for over 3 years, and have experimented with other systems as well, and must say that AD&D is the best. The article in *DRAGON* #53 on monks was sorely needed. I'm not sure who designed the class, but as a practicing martial artist for the past 8 years, it seemed a little off-center to me. The revision by Philip Meyers straightens out many of the discrepancies between the monk and other classes, as well as being a realistic portrayal.

Ronald Breth
Wichita, Kan.

Two magazines?

Dear Dragon:

I have both good and bad words to say about your magazine. First, it is very interesting but it is overpriced, like all TSR products. It would be well advised if you split the *DRAGON* into two magazines, one solely devoted to D&D and another featuring your other games. You could then charge a more reasonable price like \$1.50, or, if you must be greedy, \$2.00.

But on the other hand, your "Giants in the Earth" feature is extremely intriguing. You might consider gathering them together and publishing them in book form. You've already transformed mythology into D&D terms. Why not literature?

Also, if and when you put out an "Outer Planes" module, you should also publish a tome of extra-planar monsters.

Jim Dopkin
Shenandoah, Pa.

Heraldry hints

To the editor:

In the September 1981 issue of *DRAGON* magazine, Lewis Pulsipher has written a generally good article giving a brief introduction to armory. (I tend to disagree with him that "heraldry" should not be used, since the principal duty of heralds has been to keep coats of arms straight ["Or, a fess *checky argent and azure, within a tessure fleury-counterfleury gules? That's Sir Robert Stuart, uncle to the King of Scotland, my lord.*"], and anyway, heraldry is, rightly or wrongly, the generally accepted term.) There are a couple of things I would like to add.

First, while the fact that there are two different kinds of tinctures, the metals and the colors, is mentioned, Mr. Pulsipher gives the impression that there is no real difference between them. There is a difference, and while it is not very important in an AD&D game, where you are working with figures a couple of feet away, it is important on a battlefield. One of the first rules of heraldry is: Do not put a metal on a metal or a color on a color. The reason is that such a combination does not show up very well at a distance. (Try reading, for example, red printing on blue paper.)

There are other furs than just *ermine* and *vair*. (Incidentally, the word *vair* [a squirrel skin] is responsible for one of the great misconceptions in literature. When Charles Perrault wrote *Cinderella*, he described her footgear as "*pedes du vair*," or squirrel-skin slippers. In the English translation, this became "*pedes du verre*" — glass slippers.) The other *ermine* (black tails on a white background; note the color-on-metal combination) based furs include *ermine*s (also called *contre-ermine*), white tails on black; *ermineois*, black tails on gold; and *pean*, gold tails on black. The *vair* variants include different shapes and arrangements of the bells, and other tinctures than the standard blue and white.

There are many different charges that one can put on a shield (the term "coat of arms" refers specifically to a surcoat worn over the armor, but the usual depiction of a coat of arms is on a shield), and many variations on a theme — Fox-Davies, I believe, has examples of over two dozen different kinds of crosses.

In addition to the books Mr. Pulsipher mentions, I also recommend *Simple Heraldry* by Ian Montcrieffe and Don Pottinger. The main advantage of this book is that all the illustrations are in color.

John A. Hobson
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Singing a new tune

A different bard, not quite so hard

by Jeff Goelz

(A conversation of a DM with two NPCs; Jake Armageddon, a half-orc fighter/assassin, and Jake's brother Alphonse, a cleric/assassin.)

DM: Guys, I'm glad you could come. I want your opinion on a particular subject.

Jake: Go ahead, boss. Whatcha wanna talk about?

DM: Um . . . bards.

(The two valiant half-orcs immediately run into the nearest corner, cowering and whimpering.)

Alphonse: Ach, sss, it hurts uss. It hurts usss, nasssty DM.

DM: Don't worry, I'm not going to bring one here right now. I just wanted to talk about them.

(Jake and Alphonse apprehensively come back from the corner.)

Jake: Boss, bards are just plain mean! Me and Alphonse will probably be in the runnin' for guildmaster pretty soon now, but these bard guys could lick the tar out of both of us.

DM: Which ones are worse, the old-type bards or the newer-type ones?

Jake: Well, I'll tell ya, I'd rather run into a division of Sherman tanks than one of the old ones, and the newer ones are just as bad 'cept nowadays there sure are less of 'em, 'cause it takes them so long to become one.

Alphonse: Ach, sss, nasssty bardsses.

DM: Jake, where did you learn about Sherman tanks? . . .

the AD&D™ Players Handbook, that being that you have to go through 10 to 16 levels as something else before you may become a bard. The modified bard class described in the article which follows removes this inhibiting factor; the bard class, as redefined according to the author's experience and opinions, is one which a beginning character may enter without having to gain fighter and thief experience first. It is also a class which, unlike the official AD&D bard, does not possess thieving abilities — but does have limited power in the use of illusionist spells.

In planning a revision of the bard class, a path could have been chosen toward one of the two possible extremes: either to rework the material in the Players Handbook without altering any of the basic structure underlying the class, or to literally start from scratch and design an entire new class, perhaps having only its name and a few of the most basic characteristics in common with the official version. In the end, the path chosen lies between the extremes but ends up closer to the second one than the first.

I chose the Welsh version of the bard as my source, for several reasons. The bardic heritage of the Welsh people is rich and continues even to modern times, with annual gatherings at bardic festivals. More importantly, the version is readily available to most people in Evangeline Walton's version of the Welsh *Mabinogion* tetralogy.

Similarities may be found between this version and the version in the Players Handbook. (After all, they both describe essentially the same thing, only from different perspectives.) When there was no evident reason to change a characteristic or attribute, that item was kept fundamentally the same. Many differences will be noted, including but not limited to those mentioned above.

There is one great drawback to the bard class as described in

It is easy to see how thieving abilities could be introduced into a non-Welsh version of a bard, but not in the bard as viewed by the Welsh themselves. Welshmen had a somewhat poor reputation in the eyes of other British peoples. The concept of "welshing" on a bet is derived from the Welsh people. Also, there is a British saying that equates Welshmen with thieves. If the Welsh bard is assumed to be the prototypical bard (the Irish may have a quarrel with this), non-Welsh writers may have understandably included this thievery aspect in their literature.

The "illusionist connection" is demonstrated well by Evangeline Walton's works, such as the incredible illusion Manawyddan created at the court of Caswallon in *The Song of Rhiannon*.

This description certainly portrays a bard differently than the Players Handbook — but no claim of superiority is made for it. The differences arise from different perceptions, probably derived from a difference in sources. I can state that this bard is better for my purposes, and I believe that it has more versatility and fewer restraints than the official bard. I hope other players will find it useful as well.

Bard abilities and characteristics

A bard must have certain minimum ability scores. These are: strength 9; intelligence 15; wisdom 12; constitution 6; dexterity 16; and charisma 15. A bard does not gain 10% to earned experience for exceptional ability scores in any area.

Exp. level	Exp. points	Level Title	6-sided dice for hit pts.	Charm %	Lore %	Read Lang
1	0—2,000	Rhymester	1	10%	0%	0%
2	2,001—4,000	Versifier	2	15%	1%	5%
3	4,001—8,000	Lyrist	3	20%	2%	15%
4	8,001—16,000	Sonnateer	4	24%	5%	20%
5	16,001—33,000	Troubador	5	28%	8%	25%
6	33,001—67,000	Minstrel	6	32%	11%	30%
7	67,001—135,000	Skald	7	36%	14%	35%
8	135,001—270,000	Lorist	8	40%	18%	40%
9	270,001—500,000	Muse	9	44%	22%	45%
10	500,001—750,000	Laureate	10	48%	26%	50%
11	750,001—1,000,000	Bard	11	52%	31%	55%
12	1,000,001—1,300,000	Bard, 12th	11+1	56%	36%	60%
13	1,300,001—1,600,000	Bard, 13th	11+2	60%	41%	65%
14	1,600,001—1,900,000	Bard, 14th	11+3	64%	46%	70%
15	1,900,001—2,250,000	Bard, 15th	11+4	68%	51%	74%
16	2,250,001—2,600,000	Bard, 16th	11+5	72%	57%	77%
17	2,600,001—2,950,000	Bard, 17th	11+6	76%	63%	79%
18	2,950,001—3,300,000	Bard, 18th	11+7	80%	69%	80%
19	3,300,001—3,700,000	Bard, 19th	11+8	84%	75%	81%
20	3,700,001—4,150,000	Bard, 20th	11+9	87%	81%	82%
21	4,150,001—4,650,000	Bard, 21st	11+10	90%	87%	83%
22	4,650,001—5,400,000	Bard, 22nd	11+11	93%	93%	84%
23	5,400,001 or more	Master	11 + 12	98%	99%	86%

Race: A bard may be human, elfen, or half-elfen and have an unlimited chance for advancement. A halfling or dwarf may be a bard and attain up to 5th level.

Alignment: The alignment of a bard may be either lawful good, lawful neutral, (pure) neutral, neutral good, or (rarely) chaotic neutral or chaotic good. Bards tend to be lawful, since they depend on custom and culture to make their living. Bards may expect to be allowed admittance to the homes of most nobles and other wealthy patrons to play for their dinner, and if they are superb they may also receive other payment, perhaps a gold chain or a bag of coins thrown to the bard by the patron for his excellence. Bards are not evil, for this evil intent would pervade their songs and ruin the beauty inherent in them. Evil people are generally portrayed as being against beauty in any event.

Arms and armor of bards

The only armor a bard may wear is leather armor, and only a wooden shield is permitted. A shield may not be actively used when a bard attempts charming, since a string instrument must be played which requires the use of both hands. The weapons usable by a bard are: hand or throwing axe, club, dagger, darts, hammer, javelin, horseman's mace, scimitar, sling, broadsword, longsword, and short sword. A bard may use flaming oil, but not poison.

Bards use the same "to hit" table as fighters; however, they never strike more than once per round as fighters do when they attain high levels. Likewise, they do not gain multiple attacks against opponents of less than one hit die.

When a bard character starts his career, he is proficient with only one weapon, and suffers a -4 penalty whenever using any weapon with which he is not proficient. A bard may become proficient with one additional weapon for every four levels that have been attained; i.e., a 5th-level bard can be proficient with two weapons. Note that in no case may a bard use a weapon in each hand, such as a sword in one hand and a dagger in the other.

Magical items usable by bards

A bard may employ magical weapons of the types normally usable by a bard (see above). Magical leather armor and a magical wooden shield may also be used by a bard. They may use potions, scrolls, rings, rods, wands, and miscellaneous magic items which are usable by all classes. Any books, librams, manuals, or tomes that are read by a bard cause the same effect as if the bard were a druid. Bards may also use a *Rod of Beguiling* and all types of the *Horn of Valhalla*. Of course, they may also use any appropriate *Instruments of the Bards*.

The bard may employ some magic items with better than usual effect. These are:

Drums of Panic — saving throw is made at -1 on the die.

Horn of Blasting — 50% greater damage.

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Lyre of Building — double effects.

Pipes of the Sewers—double number of rats in half the usual time; also, a bard may substitute the *pipes* for a stringed instrument when attempting to charm children, utilizing it as such rather than for summoning rats.

Horn of the Tritons — Calm water in a two-mile radius, double the number of summoned creatures, double duration of fleeing by creatures.

Horn of Valhalla — double amount of summoned fighters.

Saving throws

A bard makes his saving throws as a cleric of equal level, except for saving throws vs. paralyzation, poison, and death magic, which the bard makes as an equal-level magic-user.

Spell use and languages

Due to their training under the tutelage of druids, bards can cast most druid spells. Some spells are unusable by bards of any level, however; these will be enumerated below. The effectiveness of a druid spell cast by a bard is the same as that of a

Spells usable by level

Bard level	Illus. spells				Druid spells						
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	-	-									
2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	2	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-
6	2	1	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-
7	3	1	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
8	3	1	-	-	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
9	3	2	-	-	3	3	1	-	-	-	-
10	3	2	-	-	3	3	2	-	-	-	-
11	3	2	1	-	3	3	2	-	-	-	-
12	3	3	1	-	3	3	2	1	-	-	-
13	3	3	2	-	3	3	3	1	-	-	-
14	3	3	2	1	3	3	3	2	-	-	-
15	3	3	2	1	3	3	3	2	1	-	-
16	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	2	1	-	-
17	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	1	-	-
18	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	1	-	-
19	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	-	-
20	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	1	-
21	4	4	3	2	4	3	3	3	2	1	-
22	4	4	3	2	4	4	3	3	2	2	-
23	5	4	3	2	4	4	3	3	2	2	1

druid one level lower than the bard; i.e., a 3rd-level bard would cast a spell with the same effectiveness as a 2nd-level druid. However, effectiveness greater than that of a 12th-level druid cannot be attained until the bard becomes a Master Bard, in which case spells are cast with 13th-level effectiveness.

Bards also have some illusionist spell powers, derived from their ability to enter strong impressions upon people's minds. Just as with the druid spells, there are some illusionist spells that are off limits to bards, and they are listed below. A bard's effectiveness in casting illusionist spells is 3 three levels less than they have attained as a bard; a 5th-level bard casts an illusionist spell as if he were a 2nd-level illusionist. A bard determines which illusionist spells are known by him, just as an illusionist does.

Spells not usable by bards

Illusionist spells

1st level: *darkness*, *hypnotism*

2nd level: *blindness*, *hypnotic pattern*, *misdirection*

3rd level: *continua*/ *darkness*, *rope trick*

4th level: *minor creation*, *shadow monsters*



Druid spells

2nd level: *barkskin*, *fire trap*

3rd level: *stone shape*

4th level: *control temperature 10' radius*, *produce fire*, *plant door* (May pass through undergrowth or thickets with this spell, but may not enter trees.)

5th level: *insect plague*, *pass plant*, *sticks to snakes*

6th level: *conjure fire elemental*, *transport via plants*, *wall of thorns*

7th level: *conjure earth elemental*, *chariot of Sustarre*, *creeping doom*, *finger of death*, *fire storm*.

Since bards are a scholarly sort, often perusing old works or learning songs of foreign languages, they have the ability to read languages and also have knowledge about many magical or legendary people, places and things.

The bard's "Read Languages" percentage determines not only whether or not the bard can comprehend a particular work, but how much of what is there may be understood. For instance, if a bard has a 25% chance to read languages and is successful in the roll to determine whether the item can be read, he can still read only 25% of the information there, so his knowledge of the work in question will still be rather sketchy. Unlike thieves, bards may read languages that are now extinct. Bards are different in the way in which they may learn languages. A bard does not need to be taught by a person who knows the language, but must study the language for an amount of time equal to 1 month, minus one day for each point of intelligence above 12 and minus one additional day for each

language already known. However, this does not allow a bard to learn more languages than his intelligence would indicate. A bard may also, if he wishes, learn languages in the same way other classes do.

The bard's lore

The bard's ability to determine the nature of magical or legendary people, places, or things is expressed as the bard's "Lore Percentage." Usually this knowledge will be dispensed to others as a riddle, poem, song, or in some other cryptic form. This ability is not a substitute for a *detect magic* spell. A typical +1 sword is generally not able to be identified as such by a bard, but the sword of a legendary hero could be identified, and the alignment (at least) of an intelligent sword could be discovered. Any magic item bearing magical inscriptions can be detected as magical and its properties determined by use of the bard's Lore Percentage. Any item to be identified must be closely scrutinized, and if it is possibly usable by the bard it must be actually handled by him. Artifacts and relics can be identified as such by the bard, but their powers won't be known, or will only be hinted at. Bards may also have knowledge about a legendary place, if the name is known or if the site has been visited.

Note that the dice should not always be allowed to dictate the course of events on a Lore Percentage roll. If there is some knowledge that the DM does not want characters to find out, he may disregard the result of a Lore Percentage roll and state that the bard knows nothing about the item or subject at hand. This should only be done for the sake of the adventure or the campaign as a whole, and the tactic should not be used so often that the bard's ability becomes worthless.

Charms and suggestions

Another ability of bards is that of *charming* creatures of at least animal-level intelligence by use of their singing and playing. Creatures that are immune to charms are not affected, nor are deafened creatures. All non-associated creatures within 4" of the bard are subject to the bard's charm. Previously associated creatures who are now hostile to the bard may be affected.

To check the success of a charm attempt, percentile dice are rolled. If the number rolled exceeds the bard's "Charm Percentage," none of the creatures within range are particularly impressed with the bard's song and must merely delay their actions for 1 segment. If the number rolled is equal to or less than the bard's Charm Percentage, all non-associated creatures must make a saving throw vs. spells. If the creature makes its saving throw, it will listen to the bard for one melee round, doing nothing else, as long as the bard continues to play.

A bard can, if he wishes, while a creature is in this charmed state, try to implant a *suggestion* (as the spell), in which case the charmed creature must again save vs. spells—this time at -2 on the die — and if it fails, it will suffer the full effects of the suggestion. If the second saving throw succeeds, the creature

is totally free of the bard's charm. To plant a suggestion, the bard must be able to speak in a language that can be comprehended by the intended victim. It is not necessary to speak the creature's language to simply charm, however.

A bard may attempt to charm as often as he wishes, but any individual creature or character may be affected only once per day. Loud noise which would drown out the bard's singing, or a physical attack upon the bard, will immediately negate charms, but not suggestions, which may be in effect.

Charming by a bard is exclusive of all other activities other than walking. If the bard begins to walk while charming, the charmed creatures will attempt to follow until or unless they are forced to be farther than 4" away, at which time the charm will be broken. A bard must use both hands to play his instrument while charming.

Other effects of a bard's songs

A bard's singing and/or playing also has other effects. By merely singing a poem or song, a bard increases the morale of associated creatures by 10%; gives +1 to those creatures on saving throws vs. *fear*, *submission*, or other attacks which act to dishearten the individual; and inspires ferocity in attack, so that "to hit" rolls are made at +1. Both of these characteristics require 1 round of poetics to produce the desired effect; during the second round after the bard begins to sing or play, the ferocity and/or morale bonuses will be in effect. These effects last for one full turn, as long as the bard continues to sing throughout this time. The bard can melee while he sings and still produce these effects, but cannot charm or cast spells and invoke the ferocity/morale bonuses at the same time.

A bard's singing and playing negates the song effects of harpies and prevents similar attacks which rely upon song. A bard's song gives +1 to the saving rolls of associated creatures and the bard himself against attacks which are based on sound, such as the keen of a groaning spirit, or the roar of an androsphinx or a dragonne. The bard's playing also stills the noise of shriekers.

When two opposing bards are in a conflict of songs, the charm percentage of the lower-level bard is subtracted from the charm percentage of the higher-level bard, thus giving a new charm percentage for the more adept bard in this instance. When two bards of equal level oppose each other, their songs have no charming effect since they cancel each other out, though the duet may sound exquisite!

A bard is useful to his party when traveling in the wilderness because a bard's songs are soothing for a road-weary traveller, thus allowing an additional 20% of normal movement per day if on foot; if all party members are mounted, a gain of an additional 10% per day is obtained.

Miscellaneous information

When a bard gains the title of Bard (11th level), he also gains the power to change form, as a druid is able to do.

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An instrument is needed for all bard abilities associated with song, except for inspiring ferocity or raising morale. In no way is any loyalty or reaction adjustment for high charisma any benefit to a bard's functions.

A Bard cannot employ henchmen nor hirelings until he gains the title of Bard (11th level), and then he may employ only druids or fighters of the human, half-elven, elven, or halfling races.

A bard will work with no other bards while adventuring, although they may practice their music or poetry with each other. Like monks and rangers, bards will retain very little of the money they gain. They will attempt to buy serviceable clothes for traveling, and will buy fine clothes and the most exquisite instrument they can acquire for use when they perform, but will keep only enough money to maintain themselves in a modest

manner. Any other money will be donated to a worthy cause or give away at whim — although not to player characters! Occasionally, when a bard amasses an amount of wealth that is a burden to his creativity, he might use it to have an extravagant festival or party instead of giving it away.

One interesting sidelight of the bard class is that if a player with a bard character has the ability or inclination to write or recite short poems or songs for particular situations, he should be encouraged to do so. For example, if a bard was to charm a creature and then plant a suggestion of *sleep* on the creature, a lullaby could be appropriately sung by the player. It could add additional flavor and enjoyment to the game.

DM: Well guys, how do you like it now?

Alphonse: Taaasssty, taaasssty!



Can a ranger or a paladin become a bard? The Players Handbook makes it sound as if only true fighters can become bards.

Is it possible for a bard-to-be who is neutral evil to become an assassin instead of a thief?

The answer to both questions is no. The bard description in the Players Handbook makes this clear by using the words "*fighters*" and "*thieves*" in italic type, for emphasis. A player character who intends to become a bard is not allowed to have the special skills and benefits of a fighter or thief sub-class during the preliminary stages of the character's development; the special skills and benefits that the character receives when achieving bard status are more than adequate to compensate for this "disadvantage."

Also, consider that the decision to become a paladin, ranger or assassin involves making a commitment in alignment that might prove uncomfortable later in a would-be bard's career. This is especially true of a paladin, who would automatically have to undergo an alignment change (and suffer all the appropriate penalties for doing so) when switching to the thief class.

* * *

When bards start as fighters, are they limited in the armor they can wear?

No, because they're not bards yet. A would-be bard who is currently a member of the fighter profession is treated exactly like a fighter, and can use any armor or weapons while following that profession. Of course, it's good to apply some forethought; if a fighter intends to eventually become a bard, he should plan to direct his weapon-proficiency training toward the weapons which a bard can use, and it would be a good idea to find a suit of +1 chain mail during the fighter phase and tuck it away in a safe place during the thief phase of the character's development.

* * *

According to the Players Handbook, a bard is permitted to wear magical chain mail and carry a bastard sword, but a thief

cannot use either. Can a bard employ these things while using thieving abilities without penalty?

Yes — assuming, of course, that the bard has attained proficiency with the sword. One of the significant benefits of becoming a bard is the ability to use armor and weapons not normally usable by a thief, and still be able to perform the various thieving abilities. All that's necessary to properly play a bard with respect to this is to interpret the Players Handbook literally: A bard is able to use any of the armor and weapon types listed as permitted to the class, and a bard is able to function as a thief of the level which the character attained while pursuing that profession. Nothing in the description given in the Players Handbook puts any limitations or restrictions on either of these characteristics. The bard is an exceptional character class, for truly exceptional characters who are able to attain and accomplish things which are beyond the ability of "normal" characters.

* * *

A bard is limited to the use of certain weapons. However, is it possible for a bard to use a weapon he was previously trained in (for instance, a bow), perhaps with a penalty involved?

Again, this is a matter simply resolved by realizing the Players Handbook *means* what it says. No, bards cannot use bows, because that weapon does not appear in the list of weapons permitted to the class. A character who intends to become a bard should make a point of gaining proficiency with at least some of the weapons usable by a bard, in addition to skills with weapons (such as the bow) which the character might prefer to employ during his tenure as a fighter. A bard-to-be might wisely decide to become proficient with bow and arrow, to improve his chances of surviving during his fighter phase. But the use of that weapon is prohibited when the character switches to the thief class, and it can never again be legally employed before or after the character actually becomes a bard.

* * *

The Players Handbook says that bards-to-be must switch to thieving before attaining 8th level as a fighter. A footnote on

page 181 of the DMG indicates that a bard could have 8th-level fighting ability. Of course, this only makes a difference if one opts for the special note regarding fighters' progression on page 74 of the DMG. Please clarify.

Okay, I'll try. The Players Handbook *does* stipulate that bards must stop gaining experience as fighters prior to attaining 8th level. But it also says that bards are subject to the effects of "magical books/librams/tomes which pertain to druids, fighters or thieves," and these magic items can raise the effective fighting or thieving level of the bard beyond the usual limits.

Thus, a bard who has 7th-level fighting ability and comes under the influence of the effects of a *Manual of Puissant Skill at Arms* will operate at the 8th level of fighting ability for as long as the manual's benefits remain in effect.

A bard is limited to "between the 5th and 9th level" in his advancement as a thief, which the sage interprets to mean that the bard-to-be must stop at the 6th, 7th or 8th level of thieving ability — between, but not including, 5th and 9th. Yet the same footnote on page 181 of the DMG allows for bards with 9th-level thieving ability — and it is possible for a bard to obtain that effective level of ability by settling down with a *Manual of*

Stealthy Pilfering, providing he had 8th-level thieving ability to begin with.

It's also worth noting the table on page 181 of the DMG, to which the troublesome footnote refers, is designed to generate non-player characters for an encounter and has no bearing on the definition of a bard as a player character. If you don't want to assume a non-player character bard with 8th-level fighting ability has gained that ability magically, then you can assume it is possible for a non-player character bard to have powers and abilities far beyond those of a normal (player character) bard. For justification of this position, see the "Adjustments to Ability Dice Rolls for Non-Player Characters" on page 100 of the DMG; many of these bonuses apply only to NPCs, and the overall effect is to make non-player characters generally more formidable (in some respects) than a player character of the same class and race. In some cases, this means non-player characters can possess ability scores higher than the maximum attainable by a player character. By the same reasoning, a NPC bard might have a higher fighting or thieving level than it is possible for a player character to possess without magical assistance.

(Continued on page 75)

Songs instead of spells

by Bill Howell

Of all the classes of AD&D™ characters described in the Players Handbook, the bard is surely the most cumbersome and awkward for both the player and the DM. A new character cannot even begin play as a bard; first he must gain experience in *two* other classes before he becomes a 1st-level bard. However, if the player perseveres and attains the prerequisites, he enjoys the satisfaction of entering one of the more versatile and unusual classes in the AD&D system.

The greatest failing of the present system governing bards is an overemphasis of the actual historic relationship between bards and druids. True, in the Celtic world, bards were essentially a subclass of druids; but the bard as described in the AD&D rules is not the historic bard. Since the game does not mandate that the druid character class wield the same near-total control over the society of a campaign world which it historically wielded in the ancient world, there is no justification for locking the bard class into such close association with it. This is especially true when one considers that the AD&D bard is based almost as much upon the Norse skald and European troubador as upon the Celtic bard.

The Norse skald was generally an older fighter whose duty it was to inspire his companions by recounting the heroic sagas of great warriors such as Sigurd, Starkad, Hrolf Kraki, and others. Nevertheless, the skald was primarily a fighter.

The European troubador was essentially a thief and an illusionist. These troubadors travelled from castle to manor house throughout Europe during the Middle Ages. They carried the latest news, sang love songs and ballads,

amused both noble and commoner alike with feats of sleight-of-hand, and were not averse to cutting a purse or picking a pocket, should the chance present itself.

Both the name *troubador* and the name *skald* were alike in that they were unofficial names given to groups of independent people sharing some characteristics; in contrast, the term *bard* refers specifically to a member of the rigidly organized hierarchy of the bardic colleges seen in the Celtic world. Celtic bards were druid-trained historians and poets (since recording historical events in verse made them easier to remember), second only to the kings in power and respectability.

Their schooling is said to have taken twenty years, and their person was so sacred that a king, fearing assassins, once surrounded himself with bards, knowing that the assassins would stay their hands rather than risk harming a bard. Indeed, the power of their songs was such that Irish legends record several instances of crops being blighted and kings being driven from their thrones simply by the power of bardic satire. Since this bard is obviously too powerful for use as a player character, the aspects of the skald and the troubador were combined with it to create a toned-down version suitable for a new character class.

Thus we find ourselves with a character class which combines fighter (Norse skald), thief (European troubador), and some form of spell caster. The rules outlined in the Players Handbook adequately cover the first two abilities; it is the bard's spell-casting ability which could use alteration.

First, the bardic colleges should be sponsored by the bards themselves in a

guild-like arrangement, rather than belonging to the druids. In addition, there is no justification for bards possessing uniquely druidic abilities such as shape-changing, +2 saving throw vs. fire and lightning, immunity to woodland charm, and all the rest.

It is also inappropriate for bards to exercise their spell-like powers by casting druidic spells; down through history and legend, from Orpheus and his lyre, through the Irish legends, to such modern fictional bards as Wymarc in Andre Norton's *Quag Keep*, it is by means of certain mystic songs that bards tap the powers of other planes to do their will on the Prime Material.

Bards do *not* cast spells; instead, they sing their "Songs of Power" while playing their chosen stringed instrument. By tapping the magical power of other planes through the proper sounds, these Songs of Power have essentially the same effect as certain of the magic-user, illusionist, and druidic spells.

Bards do not carry spell books, nor do they pray to a deity to receive their Songs; rather, they memorize all their Songs during their studies at the various colleges, a new level at each of the five lower colleges. Afterwards, they simply choose each day which Songs of Power they will implant in their minds that day, just as other spell-casters do.

It is also possible for them to research/compose a new Song like other classes can do with spells. However, it is vital to note that all Songs (standard or original) have (1) the verbal component of the bard singing while accompanying himself on a stringed instrument with which he is familiar; (2) the somatic component of playing that instrument, using both hands while standing still or walking

slowly over an even surface; and (3) generally, no other material component besides the instrument. If the bard stops playing or is disturbed in any way, the Song fails and is wasted. The Spells Usable chart in Appendix II of the Players Handbook is suitable for determining how many Songs a bard can remember.

Level of singing: In deciding the appropriate level at which a bard sings his Songs (for range and effect considerations), use the bard's actual level for those Songs which are derived from or

similar to magic-user and illusionist spells; for druidic Songs, a bard will cast them at his level until he reaches the 12th level; thereafter he continues to cast them at the 12th level until he becomes a 23rd-level bard, whereupon he casts them at the 13th level of spell-casting ability.

The bard's Songs of Power

(S = Special song described below; I = as the Illusionist spell; M = as the magic-user spell; D = as the druid spell.)

First level

- 1) Animal Non-Aggression (S)
- 2) Audible Glamour (I)
- 3) Comprehend Languages (M)
- 4) Dancing Lights (M)
- 5) Darkness (I)
- 6) Entangle (D)
- 7) Friends (M)
- 8) Hold Portal (M)
- 9) Light (M)
- 10) Protection From Evil (M)
- 11) Shield (M)
- 12) Sleep (M)

Third level

- 1) Call Lightning (D)
- 2) Continual Darkness (I)
- 3) Fly (M)
- 4) Gust of Wind (M)
- 5) Hold Animal (D)
- 6) Hold Person (M)
- 7) Prot. From Evil, 10' r. (M)
- 8) Prot. From Normal Missiles (M)
- 9) Summon Insects (D)
- 10) Tongues (M)

Second level

- 1) Continual Light (M)
- 2) Deafness (I)
- 3) Invisibility (M)
- 4) Knock (M)
- 5) Levitate (M)
- 6) Obscurement (D)
- 7) Scare (M)
- 8) Shatter (M)
- 9) Strength (M)
- 10) Ventriloquism (I)
- 11) Warp Wood (D)
- 12) Wizard Lock (M)

Fourth level

- 1) Animal Summoning I (D)
- 2) Call Woodland Beings (D)
- 3) Dispel Exhaustion (I)
- 4) Dispel Magic (D)
- 5) Emotion (I)
- 6) Fear (M)
- 7) Fire Charm (M)
- 8) Fire Shield (M)
- 9) Minor Globe of Invulnerability (M)
- 10) Repel Insects (D)

Fifth level

- 1) Animate Dead (M)
- 2) Animal Summoning II (D)
- 3) Chaos (I)
- 4) Conjure Elemental (M)
- 5) Control Winds (D)
- 6) Hold Monster (M)
- 7) Insect Plague (D)
- 8) Maze (I)
- 9) Satire (S)
- 10) Transmute Rock to Mud (M)
- 11) Wall of Fire (D)
- 12) Wall of Force (M)

evil Duke is fun, woe to the bard unlucky enough to be caught by the Duke's men.

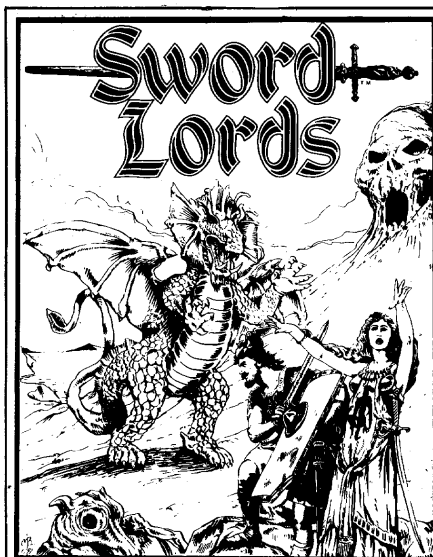
Animal Non-Aggression

Level: 1 (Enchantment/Charm)
Range: 3"
Duration: 5 rounds +1/1v
Area of Effect: 3" r. circle
Casting Time: 3 segments
Saving Throw: none

Upon hearing this Song's soothing tones, any normal animals in its area of effect will cease to act aggressively toward the bard's party. The Song is negated if the party should molest the animals or their lairs in any way. This Song does not cause friendship on the animals' part, and it endows the bard with neither communicative nor controlling ability. It has no effect on magical animals or on normal animals under magical control.

Magic items and instruments

There are two ways to view the ques-
(Continued on page 74)



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Satire (Conjuration/Summoning)

Level: 5

Range: Special

Duration: Special

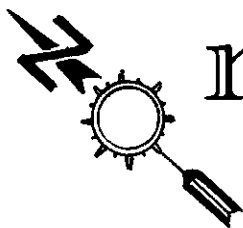
Area of Effect: One individual

Casting Time: 1-12 days

Saving Throw: Special

The use of this powerful song is a bit tricky. It reflects the ability of a high-level bard to ridicule a prominent public figure who behaves incorrectly. The scandalous Song has the effect of halving its target's charisma until such time as he repents and atones for his actions. However, the target's actions must truly be objectionable in the prevailing moral climate of the area (DM's decision, based on the prevailing alignment of the region); otherwise, the satire is unjust and the bard's own charisma is halved instead, until he travels at least 50 leagues away, and he may not return to the region for one full year. Players are warned that while singing nasty songs about the

Map hazard, not haphazard



Real topographic maps fill out fantasy worlds

by William Hamblin

While wandering through mountains, fields, jungles, deserts, swamps, or forests, a player character often faces situations in which his salvation or doom depends upon the precise configuration and nature of the terrain over which he is passing. For example, if a character on foot is being attacked by mounted men, flight into a grove of trees could prevent his opponents from pursuing him on horseback. In a desert, the frequency and location of water holes is often of supreme importance. Swamps, marshes, box canyons, mountain passes, or land elevation can all, at various times, be important factors in fantasy gaming. Even if an exact knowledge of the nature of the terrain is not of life-and-death importance, detailed terrain descriptions can often add a great deal of flavor to the game.

The average DM usually has only a rough, hand-drawn map at a large scale which he uses as a basis for describing the terrain through which characters are passing, and he fills in the necessary details as the need arises, either by personal whim or by the roll of the almighty dice. The tremendous time and effort that would be required to create detailed, small-scale maps of an entire fantasy world would overwhelm all but the most dedicated gamer, and such efforts (at least most efforts I've seen) usually bear little relationship to the actual nature of geological, topographical, climatic and hydrological reality. What the DM really needs, but usually finds it impossible to personally create, is a map which shows *every* detail of the terrain in which the action is occurring.

Topographic maps

The need for such a detailed map bearing a strong resemblance to real terrain conditions has been met for gamers by, of all organizations, the United States government. Although I doubt that they

had role-playing gamers in mind as possible users, the topographical maps which have been designed by the government fill all the needs of the most exacting gamer. Topographic maps were designed originally to give the military detailed and accurate maps of terrain for tactical planning, and therefore include symbols representing all features, both natural and man-made, of a given area.

Any feature which exists on the surface has accurate symbolic representation on topographic maps. Land forms are represented in brown, with different symbols for sand, gravel, dunes, washes, mud pans, and depressions, with contour lines showing elevation. Blue is used to represent hydrological features including rivers, streams, springs, wells, intermittent streams, glaciers, lakes, marshes, and swamps. There are various additional symbols for underwater features, such as falls, rapids, reefs, or rocks that could be a hindrance to shipping. Green, naturally enough, is the color for plant life: forests, scrub, oases, orchards, vineyards, wooded marshes, jungles, etc., all have independent symbolic representation. Finally, black and red are used to represent all man-made features: buildings, other structures, roads and ruins, as well as political boundaries.

Another wonderful fact about topographic maps is that they come in many different scales. The smallest generally available scale is 1:24,000; that is, one inch on the map equals 24,000 inches (2,000 feet) of real terrain. Maps at this scale are superbly detailed. Contour lines, which are a series of concentric brown lines on the map showing changes in elevation, are shown for every change of 10 feet. At the 1:24,000 scale, every individual building is represented and outlined with some detail. The remarkable thing is that a map at this scale exists for every square mile of the United States. (I'll get to maps of foreign countries later.)

The next scale is 1:62,000. At this scale, one inch is equivalent to about a mile, (1 cm = 625 m) with contours for every 20 feet. Cities are represented as pink splotches, but many buildings outside of cities are still represented as individual elements.

With maps of 1:250,000 scale, the next largest size, you lose the details of individual manmade structures, while retaining as much detail as possible on natural characteristics. At this scale, one inch is equivalent to about 4 miles (1 cm = 2.5 km), with contours every 50 feet.

Finally there is 1 : 1,000,000 scale, with contours every 150 or 300 feet, and with one inch representing 16 miles. Maps at all of these scales covering any part of the United States are available to the public.

Topographic maps and gaming

Topographic maps can be used many ways in gaming. The first is obviously in an "after the holocaust" scenario in which the United States was nuked, and in the process of which mankind has been thrown back into a pre-industrial society. Perhaps the fabric of the universe was rent, and magic has magically become effective. Genetic mutation from radiation produces plant, animal and human monstrosities for characters to battle. The DM uses the topographic maps to represent the United States in such a condition, and the adventures begin. The methods of using the maps in this case are obvious.

However, there are many more subtle ways in which topographic maps can be utilized. First of all, the DM can ignore all man-made features (roads, towns, etc.) on the map, and draw in his own. If you have designed magnificent structures in which you wish to entrap any unwary characters, simply get a topographic map, locate your cities, dungeons, castles, ruins, etc., on it as you please, and begin the adventure. You can obviously fill the topographic features of the maps


Some readers may object that, since most of us know the general outline of

But if such a situation worries you, there are a number of ways to get around it. Most obviously, don't let players see the map or know what actual region you are using. I doubt if anyone could guess what region a DM is describing without the help of modern place names. For example, try to guess what place is described in the following sentence: "It is a large seaport, located on a river, with some swamps in the surrounding areas." Is it New Orleans, Jacksonville, Florida or Norfolk, Virginia? Your guess is as good as mine. (I was actually thinking about Miami.) Additional obscurity can be developed by changing the direction of the compass. Whenever you give directions to a character, use east on the map as north, or if you want to be really tricky, as southwest. With the lack of modern place names and "realistic" compass directions, the character will be hard pressed to guess where he "really" is. Furthermore, you could make some of

If you want to depict a large mountain range, nothing could be better than topographic maps of the Rockies or the Sierra Nevada ranges. A smaller mountain range could be represented by the Appalachians. The bayous of Louisiana

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make a perfect coastal marsh, while the addition of a few monstrosities to the Okeefinokee Swamp or the Everglades in Florida would be a challenge to the most intrepid adventurer. If you must have a northern zone for a Viking-type race, Alaska is ready-made. Arizona, New Mexico, or Nevada are probably arid enough for deserts, with Utah providing a mountainous desert region. Kansas and the other regions of the central United States would make a wonderful steppe zone for nomads. The Mississippi River could serve very nicely if your fantasy world has a major river basin. Jungles could be developed, with a little help, from the topography of southern Louisiana, Alabama and Georgia. What about adventures in a civilization based on the topography of the Grand Canyon?

The possibilities are virtually limitless. Simply get maps of a topographic region of the United States that fits the general description of the type of area you want, and fit it into your created map. This method provides minutely detailed terrain in a fantasy setting.

Which maps are best?

In addition to the topographic maps of the entire United States in the four scales mentioned above, there are maps at different scales, printed by states or counties, for specific regions. Which scale is best for gaming? The obvious answer is "the one that fits your needs," but here are a few suggestions of some things that I have found useful.

The maps vary in size, but a rough figure for a single map might be somewhere around 2 feet square. A 1:250,000 scale map of this size, with one inch equaling about 4 miles, represents an area about 100 miles long. A party traveling on foot might be able to cover such an area in a week, depending on the type of terrain being crossed. If you go to the 1:62,000 scale, with one inch equaling a mile, a party can cover the distance across a 2-foot map in as little as two days. A 1:24,000 scale map of that size can be covered by a party on foot in less than a day. For the purposes of general outside travel, the 1:250,000 map is probably the best. It is detailed enough to give a good idea of what the terrain is like, but not so detailed that the adventurers will be off the map in less than a day of game time. I would use 1:24,000 maps for areas where important events might occur, such as around major cities, dungeons, castles, graveyards or ruins. However, this is entirely up to the DM. A dedicated gamer with enough money to afford them might want to get maps at 1:24,000 for his entire world, which admittedly would make for some magnificent gaming.

How to get the maps

Most states have a central distribution

office from which maps of that state, and sometimes of surrounding regions as well, can be purchased. In addition, there are usually various distribution centers in some of the major cities of each state, and often in county seats as well. The simplest method of acquiring topographic maps is to go to your local state distribution center and get the ones you need. You can usually find out where a state distribution center is by calling an information number at your local city or county offices and start questioning. If you take this option, however, you are often limited to getting whatever maps they happen to have in stock, which are usually of your local county or state. (There is nothing wrong with this; it might be interesting to take some unwary adventurers through a number of harrowing experiences and then tell them that it all occurred on the topography of their hometown county.) However, if you live in Wisconsin and want to have part of your adventures in a desert region, it might be difficult to find local terrain conditions suitable for such an adventure. In this case, you need to turn to the national distribution centers from which you can get maps of any part of the United States.

In some ways it might be worth the effort to write to the national center even if you plan only to use topographic maps of your own locality in your gaming. By writing to the national distribution centers you can get (free upon request) indexes showing topographic maps published for each state of the United States and the island territories. These indexes also contain information regarding local map reference libraries, local map dealers, and Federal map distribution centers, and instructions for ordering maps. There is also a sheet explaining all the topographic map symbols provided on request (although most maps have legends attached).

Each map must be ordered by a special series and code number; if you plan to order by mail direct from the government, it is important to get access to these national map indexes in order to be sure to get the map you want. Public libraries often have copies of the national map indexes.

Although anyone can write to any of the Federal map distribution centers for information, the following are the main offices and the regions they generally serve. If you live east of the Mississippi, write to:

Branch of Distribution
U. S. Geological Survey
1200 South Eads St.
Arlington VA 22202

West of the Mississippi write to:
Branch of Distribution
U. S. Geological Survey
Box 25286 Federal Center
Denver CO 80225

There is also a special office for residents of Alaska:

Distribution Section
U. S. Geological Survey
Federal Bldg. Box 12
101 12th Avenue
Fairbanks AK 99701

Maps printed by the federal government are not limited only to topographic maps. The government has prepared a number of different types of maps, charts, and photographs, many of which are available to the public. Further information on exactly what types of maps are available, their costs, and how to order them can be obtained from:

National Cartographic
Information Center
U. S. Geological Survey
507 National Center
Reston VA 22092

Now we come to the really important issue: How much do these topographic maps cost? You may be pleasantly surprised to find that the average cost, if the maps are purchased directly from federal distribution centers, is about \$2.00 per map. (This price may vary slightly according to size, scale, the date of the most recent printing, inflation, etc.) For a large four- or five-colored, very detailed map, this is a real bargain. These maps can often be purchased from book stores or other businesses, but the prices are usually higher from such institutions.

The only real problem with the government services is that it can take from 4 to 8 weeks for delivery from the federal distribution centers. For inflation fighters, a 30% discount is offered by the U.S. Geological Survey if the order totals \$300 or more, which would make it well worth your effort to organize enough friends, each buying maybe \$20 worth of maps, to get the discount.

Topographic maps of the world

Having an adventure in the U.S.A. may not have enough of the "mythic spirit" to be exciting to many people. After all, the vast majority of you reading this article live in this country, and a role-playing adventure is supposed to take you away from "here." For such people, the federal government once again comes through. In addition to the topographic maps of the U.S. provided by the U. S. Geological Survey, the government's Defense Mapping Agency can provide gamers with detailed maps of the world.

If you don't want your adventures in the Rockies, go to the Andes, the Alps or the Himalayas. A river adventure could take place on the Amazon, Nile, Ganges, or Yangtze. The Sahara is perhaps the best desert of all, while African or Brazilian jungles are notoriously impassable. Antarctic ice, Russian steppes, and the British Isles are all available to be modi-

fied and used as the topography of a fantasy world. By modifying and interlocking maps of various parts of the world, you can form an essentially unlimited number of fantasy terrains, all "realistic" because they are indeed a reflection of reality.

The only problem with using world maps is that, as far as I know, the Defense Mapping Agency only provides maps at 1:1,000,000 scale for public use. (I may be wrong on this. I know that superb maps of nearly all of the world at 1:250,000 and of many other areas at smaller scales have been printed, but I believe they are not available to the public.) The 1:1,000,000 maps are really excellent, and should be satisfactory for most needs, but do lack much of the detail available on the smaller scales. Maps at the 1:1,000,000 scale are available for most of the world from:

Defense Mapping Agency
Office of Distribution
Attn: DDCP
Washington DC 20315

You have to ask about "The World, Series 1301," and an index for the code numbers of the maps is available upon request from this office as well. The cost for these maps is also about \$2.00 each.

In addition, foreign governments have usually made maps of their own nations

at detailed scales. Although I have never tried it, I would imagine that if you wrote to a foreign embassy requesting information regarding the availability of topographic maps of their country, they would be more than willing to help you. Furthermore, you can often get detailed maps of foreign countries, or at least information on how to obtain them, from bookstores or travel agencies. (However, the maps available from such sources are often just road maps or tourist maps, which aren't nearly as useful for gaming as topographic maps.)

Another useful type of map is the Aeronautical Chart. These maps are fundamentally a form of topographic map, detailing land contours, water systems, major towns and some (but unfortunately not all) forms of vegetation. However, the major purpose for these maps is in navigation for pilots, and they therefore contain an overlay containing a great of information which is important for pilots, but useless for gaming purposes. (Unless you learn to read the air charts and use the data for dragon flights, etc.) The great advantage of aeronautical charts is that they are printed in great quantity (every pilot has to have one) for every area of the world where flights may occur (which is just about anywhere). This mass printing allows them to be sold much cheaper than regular topo-

graphic maps. Each sheet measures almost 4 feet by 4 feet (in other words, covering the area of four normal-sized topographic maps) and costs only \$2.25. For about the same cost, you can cover approximately four times the area using aeronautical charts than you could with regular topographic maps. The charts come in two scales, 1:1,000,000 and 1:500,000 (the smaller scale is known as a Tactical Pilotage Chart), and charts in both scales are available for nearly the entire world. If you can learn to ignore the aeronautical information, these maps are definitely the cheapest way to go.

Ordering information for these charts can be obtained by writing to:

U. S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Ocean Survey
C-44
Riverdale MD 20840

and asking for the Catalog of Aeronautical Charts and Related Publications. The charts you should look for in the catalog are the World Aeronautical and Operational Navigation Charts or the Tactical Pilotage Charts.

"Historical" fantasies

There is a final way to use topographic maps in role-playing games, which in my opinion is the most intriguing of all. This

The sun hangs low on the horizon illuminating the ruins of civilization with a bloody light. Is it the sunset of the earth or the sunrise of a brave new world? You can decide as you boldly stride the rubble-strewn streets of the

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is to use actual historical places and kingdoms as the topographic basis for your adventures, but "fantasize" the nature of that kingdom, following the much-used theory of parallel historical universes, for example. There are a number of possibilities for such adaptations. If you are in love with Irish or Welsh mythology, get detailed maps of Ireland and Wales, and play out your scenarios there, adapting them to the Celtic background. If you have Viking blood (thinned though it may be) pulsing through your veins, use topographic maps of Norway, Denmark and Sweden, adding a nice seasoning of monsters and magic, and let the adventures begin.

For example, a "fantasized" Incan Empire could be an exciting basis for fantasy role-playing, as would developing a fantasy world in Africa around the Zimbabwe ruins. A fantasy world in India, where the masses of Hindu gods are brought to life and power, would be fascinating. Personally I have developed my system around Egypt in the Middle Ages, and I will describe what I have done as an example of what to look for and how to proceed.

First, pick an area that is intrinsically interesting to you. I think you will find that any place on earth has enough history and mythology to form the basis for an excellent fantasy world. Although

you don't have to follow exactly the historical, social, cultural, political, economic or religious background for the area you choose, I find it more interesting to do so. Good background reading will provide a wealth of historical and cultural detail that would be impossible to reproduce in a world based entirely on your imagination.

I find it exciting to introduce historical characters and events into the situation for the characters to deal with. Something to watch out for in this regard is to not let the players know exactly what is happening historically. Since everyone (I assume) knows that William the Conqueror defeated Harold at Hastings in 1066, a tricky DM would juggle the facts, people and dates just enough to throw the characters off balance. For example, have William's invasion come before the Battle of Stamford Bridge instead of after it. Usually players know just enough history to keep them wondering, but not enough to give them unfair advantages, especially if you make some judicious modifications in the course of historical events. On the other hand, you can always use the topographic maps and the mythology of the area you choose and develop your own historical background.

I chose medieval Egypt as the basis for a fantasy world for a number of reasons. In the later Middle Ages, Cairo was per-

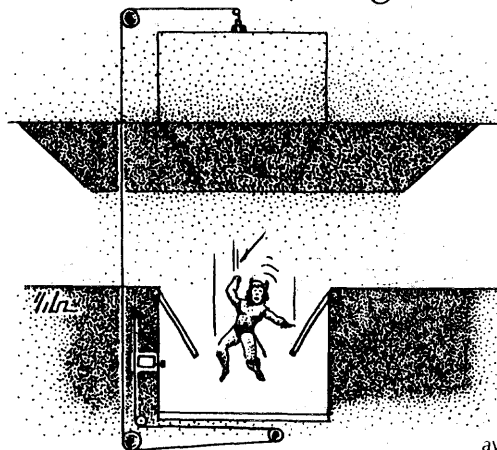
haps the most cosmopolitan city in the world, with trading ships arriving from Spain in the west, Zimbabwe in the south, Russia in the north, and China in the east. This characteristic increases the possible types of adventurers and adventures that could be found. As I developed my system, I used the ancient Egyptian gods and mythology as the "Elder Gods" who were cast from power by Christianity and Islam, but who still have thousands of undercover worshippers in secret cults, and who therefore still wield great power. I use maps and plans of the numerous antiquities of Egypt as the basis for dungeon explorations, adding on whatever levels, rooms, secret doors, magic, monsters, etc., I want. When characters go searching for dungeons in medieval Egypt, I know exactly what is where, and in many cases have a historical list of what treasures were found by modern archaeologists. (If, however, characters in medieval Egypt go in search of King Tut's Tomb, they can be sure that I will have changed or masked its location somewhat, as well as added more or different rooms and monsters.)

I chose to be as historical as possible, and that is where topographic maps became especially useful. I was unable to find any small-scale maps of Egypt and the surrounding area for sale, so I went

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When the trap door slams down against the side of the pit, it hits a button on the wall which causes a vial of acid to shatter. The acid rapidly dissolves a wire that runs up through the dungeon wall to secure in place the section of roof above the pit. As long as weight remains on the floor of the pit the pressure plate therein will insure that the block of ceiling remains in place. If all the weight is removed, then the ceiling (continued on page 18 of Grimtooth's TRAPS)

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to the University of Michigan Library and got photocopies of the maps (scale 1:1,000,000) I was interested in. Photocopying maps can be much cheaper than buying them, but one thing should be remembered: You lose the color of the original maps, so it is best to try to find one-color topographic maps of the region you are interested in. For Egypt, there were some one-color, WW II vintage British maps in the collection of the University of Michigan which were just what I needed. I added colors later myself. If you want to try to find maps that can be photocopied, the best option is to head for the nearest large university library. Often a large university library also has facilities to make reproductions of the maps you are interested in, sometimes at special sizes and sometimes in color.

I developed a detailed modified chronological time line, including the major sultans, emirs, and events, which I can use to put characters into situations involving actual people, places and events, with a nice dose of magic and monsters thrown in. Fortunately, most people don't know enough about medieval Egyptian history to really know what is going to happen historically, so I can also add in some astrology and prophecy to boot.

A final use for maps that is highly applicable to a "fantasized" historical world

comes from the fact that archaeologists and art historians have usually studied, described and reconstructed the remains of ancient and medieval civilizations in great detail, publishing their findings with accurate maps. This is especially true for Egypt, which has left numerous monuments both from antiquity and Islamic times. Detailed maps of the city of Cairo as it was at various periods of the Middle Ages have been reconstructed by historians. Therefore, urban adventures can occur using a detailed map of an actual medieval Cairo, including in it the major buildings, quarters, and bazaars, as well as the twisting streets for which medieval middle eastern cities were famous. There are similar maps for most of the other major cities of the region, as well as important buildings, castles and fortresses. Anyone wanting the plan for a wizard's castle can simply get photocopies of the floor plans of famous castles of the Middle Ages and use them with slight (if any) modifications. Drawings or photographs of antiquities are also available, to show players what their characters are seeing. There is something greatly exciting about adventures in the streets of medieval Baghdad, Cairo, Delhi, Peking, Constantinople, Rome, Paris, or London — all of which, along with many other medieval and ancient cities, have been reconstructed in detail

by historians. (It should be noted that detailed historical maps of cities, buildings and castles which I have described above are usually only to be found in scholarly journals, for which one needs access to the library of a major university.)

The methods and ideas described here are by no means the limit to the uses that can be made of topographic and historical maps in role-playing gaming. With a little imagination, a clever DM will be able to discover many specific applications to meet his personal needs and desires, thereby making his scenarios more realistic, detailed, and challenging.

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Protection circles and the like, plus news of the north central Flanaess

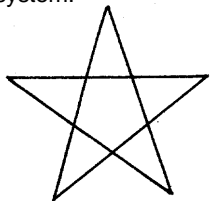
by Gary Gygax

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As promised last time, this column will detail the current happenings in the north central Flanaess. Before that, however, are a few words regarding a different aspect of ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ game play.

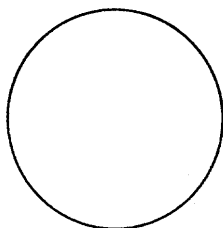
You will recall that the *Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth* module was mentioned in the previous issue. In this module are quite a few new spells detailing the conjuration and servitude of powerful creatures from other planes. TSR's Product Development Department was worried about a seeming conflict between the new spell *ensnarement* (and its various protective devices) and the information found in the *Monster Manual* regarding protective devices versus devils.

Actually, both are correct, being facets of the whole. Here are the six protective devices and their uses in the official AD&D™ game system:



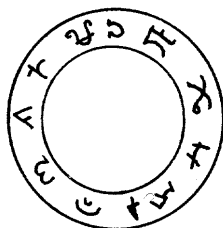
Pentacle

This device is a magical sealing figure to contain any creature magically trapped and contained so as to seal the container against escape.



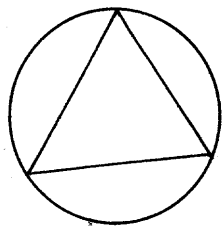
Magic (protection) circle

This inscription is effective against lesser devils and lesser hostile sendings.



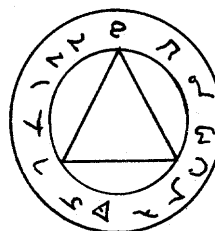
Magic Circle

This inscription wards against all devils and creatures from the upper Outer and Astral Planes.



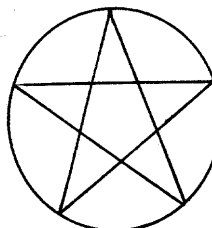
Thaumaturgic Triangle

This inscription is effective versus creatures from the Concordant Opposition, Elemental, and Ethereal Planes.



Thaumaturgic Circle

This device wards against demons of power not greater than Type V, as well as those warded by a plain Thaumaturgic Triangle.



Pentagram

This inscription protects against all creatures from the lower Outer Planes, except devils, but including all forms of demons.

IUZ BEFORE AND AFTER

The events in the north central Flanaess revolve around two groups of states. In the west the action surrounds the Wolf Nomads, the Rovers of the Barrens, Iuz, and the Horned Society. Eastward, interesting developments allowed the Duchy of Tenh to make a strong foray into the Bandit Kingdoms. The events in the west will be dealt with first.

Wolf Nomads: Following the rise in power of the humanoid hordes of the cambion, Iuz, the Wegwuir avoided the eare east of the Black Water, spending their aggressive energies upon the Tiger Nomads to the west and even moving south along the Sepia-Uplands to raid Perrenland. In the spring of 578, Iuz actually-sent an army into the north to take the poor town of Eru-Tovar, the only real city of the Wolf people, the pride of their Tarkhan. As fate would have it, the Chakyiks were themselves interested in a venture against Ekbir, so they were quite happy to conclude a treaty. This freed a horde of 20,000 Wolf Nomads to face the invaders. Tarkhan Bargru himself commanded the force, which consisted of some 2,000 armored

lancers (medium cavalry), 10,000 light horsemen, 7,000 light horse-archers, and 1,000 armored crossbowmen on horseback.

This force arrived outside Eru-Tovar late in the summer, just in time to raise the siege. The army of luz retreated eastward, and then fell back along the Black Water, hoping to withdraw safely to the nearer arm of the Howling Hills where humanoid reinforcements could be picked up in considerable numbers.

The Tarkhan's force caught the retiring army of luz along the great north bend of the Black Water. After a close pursuit lasting several days, during which the majority of the light humanoid infantry and goblin cavalry was shot to pieces by the Wegwiur horse-archers, a pitched battle was fought. As usual, the powerful figures in the opposing forces basically neutralized each other, while the troops engaged in combat of the more basic sort. Fortunately for the Wolf Nomads, luz himself was engaged elsewhere and could not intervene. The horsemen once again proved superior to the ill-disciplined masses of invading infantry, and only a few thousand survivors of luz's ruined army made it to the relative safety of the Howling Hills. Losses by the Wegwiur totalled some 2,000 killed and about twice that number wounded. Of the invading army, some 2,000 humans and 6,000 humanoids were slain, with no prisoners taken. It is assumed that desertion accounts for the balance of the total army initially encamped before Eru-Tovar. (This action is known as the Battle of Black Water Bend and was fought in the Dozenmonth of the Squirrel on the 22nd day, CY 578, or BH 3237.)

Following this success, Bargru returned to his capital, where the garrison of some 2,000 men was busily repairing the badly damaged defenses — mainly brickwork and earth and timber which had been nearly destroyed at the time of relief. Satisfied that all was in order, the Tarkhan then sent strong parties of riders to patrol the area south of the Cold Marshes between the Black Water and the Dulsi River. One of these groups continued on as emissaries to the Rovers of the Barrens, its leader being Lekkol Noyon, the Tarkhan's seventh son (the first child of Bargru's third and favorite wife, the Yepita woman, Golden Dove). Lekkol's troop of 1,000 cavalry made contact with the Yepita tribe about one month after the defeat of luz's expedition. Lekkol subsequently took part in the raid conducted by the Red Horse and Black Horse clans of the Rovers.

Meanwhile, Bargru went with his personal guard to the lands of the Guchek, the Wild Dog people, whose territory borders the eastern portion of Lake Quag and the uppermost reaches of the Sepias. Jicta, Khan of the Guchek, had failed to appear when summoned for the stroke against the invaders at Eru-Tovar. The Tarkhan underestimated the degree of revolt by Jicta Khan, for Perrenland had subverted the Guchek by bribes and the promise of aid if the Wild Dog Nomads would declare independence from the Tarkhan of the Wegwiur. This move by Perrenland should have been no surprise, considering the earlier incursions by the Wolf Nomads. In any event, Bargru managed to escape the trap after an ambush, but at the spring of CY 579, the Guchek remained independent and defiant.

luz: After a period of rebuilding and strengthening his domain, the Lord of Evil set his mind upon the lands to the south. Various pacts and treaties were concluded with the none-too-loved Horned Society, thus assuring no immediate trouble from the east. Groups of humanoids — gnolls and flinds, orgrillons, bugbears, and even ogres — under human leadership were sent across the Dulsi River to first occupy the nearer portion of the Vesve Forest, and then work south to harass the border of Furyondy. luz caused a fleet of 40 galleys to be built at Dorakaa in 577. With this force he hoped to wrest control of Whyestil Lake from King Belvor, thus exposing all of the northern portion of Furyondy, from the Vesve along the Crystal River to the Veng and then to the Whyestil, to easy invasion. To facilitate this move, luz joined forces with the resurgent followers of Elemental Evil, believing that such a threat on the Kingdom's southern border would distract the Furyondians from his much

more ambitious plans in the north. While his forces were being readied, luz ordered his northern contingents to capture Eru-Tovar and thus stop any possible move by the Wolf Nomads upon the upper portion of his realm while his invasion of the south was in progress. Leaving the execution of his will to trusted underlings, luz himself went far to the south to stir up trouble.

The host of luz's northern marches came under the dual command of Lord Choldraf (14th-level cleric) and Mellard-Plict (12th-level magic-user). Between them they brought 2,000 heavy cavalry, 1,000 light horse, and about 4,000 infantry, evenly divided between heavy foot and crossbowmen. Humanoid contingents included some 3,000 goblins and xvarts, serving as scouts and raiders, 6,000 orcs and 4,000 hobgoblins as shock troops, and a vast, mixed company of norkers, knolls, flinds, orgrillons, bugbears, and ogres totalling some 5,000 to 8,000 depending upon the whims of its component members. This force gathered in the arm of the Howling Hills between the Dulsi and Blackwater, and at the beginning of summer (the Dozen-month of Flocktime in the north country) in CY 578 marched westward. There was much quarreling during the course of the move; Lord Choldraf berated Mellard-Plict for his lack of control of the masses of humanoids which the wizard levied and commanded, while the latter scoffed at both Lord Choldraf's own powers and at his well trained, but relatively weak, troops. When siege was laid to Eru-Tovar the following month, each commander strove to outdo the other, each wishing credit for taking the Wegwiur stronghold. This lack of co-operation enabled the defenders, numbering only about 3,400 effective troops, to withstand almost ten weeks of siege by a force totalling well over 25,000. The losses by the attackers were compounded by the rival factions often slaying their wounded cohorts if they held loyalty to the opposite commander.

When Tarkhan arrived to raise the siege, Lord Choldraf was forced to screen the withdrawal of the luzites, since the humanoids under the wizard Mellard-Plict were too undisciplined and unreliable to handle the assignment. In fact, most of the wizard's troops had deserted, or merely decided to wander off on a raid of their own, by the time the Battle of Black Water Bend was fought. The high priest is in disgrace now, but it is likely that Choldraf will find some way to redeem himself with luz. It is reported that the wizard fled immediately upon the loss of the battle, going far south and now raising companies of bullywugs in the Vast Swamp, supposedly at the behest of Wastri, the Hopping Prophet.

The intelligence network of Furyondy discovered the plan to wrest control of Whyestil Lake from their navy, and before the luzite army stood before Eru-Tovar, King Belvor's fleet staged a daring raid upon Dorakaa. The majority of the galleys being built were burned in the stocks, and seven of those which had been completed and outfitted were captured, while another five were sunk. Only in the Vesve Forest and along the western shore of Whyestil did the invasion plans bear any fruit. The inrush of many thousands of humanoids pushed back the companies of men, elves, and gnomes who had been slowly but surely regaining the place from the evil denizens holding it. South of the Deepstil River, save for the Sepia Uplands and the western verge, all of the Vesve fell into the hands of luz's minions. The forces of Highfolk and Velunese contingents quickly regained the southwestern corner, but as of the year 579, most of the great forest, as well as the shore of Whyestil Lake, remained under control of humanoids and evil humans now fortifying it.

luz, Lord of Evil, hastened home to try to salvage the situation, and it was his direct intervention which enabled his forces to hold their southern gains against a valiant counteroffensive staged by the Furyondians. The walled town of Crockport now stands near the frontier, and the opponents are readying their respective forces for more fighting soon.

Horned Society: Pressure by the nobles holding the Shield Lands prevented the all-out move which the Hierarchs have long wished to make down the Ritensa River to the northern shore of the Nyr Dyv. The diabolical leaders of the Horned Society would gladly have allowed luz his hoped-for gains to their west, in order that they themselves might take Willip and overrun the Shield Lands. Instead, the Hierarchs, ignorant of luz's plans, spent themselves in dribbles, first against Furyondy and the Shield Lands and then in defending against mounting incursions of war parties from the north. Just as their forces were about to turn southward again, reacting to the contest between luz and Furyondy, a major raid struck into the Society's north, and the Hierarchs' army had to turn around and move with all speed northward. Some 5,000 cavalry moved to block the further penetration of the raiders, while a formidable army of 5,000 humans, 2,000 goblins, 4,000 orcs and 7,000 hobgoblins followed. This strong show of force was assembled because several reports from survivors of raided settlements claimed that the attackers numbered 10,000 horse and included several thousand Wegwiur. Allied bandits and brigands were called upon to rendezvous with the Hierarchs' thousands of troops at Dingaverge, a small town on the edge of the Fellreev (A4-54 on the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ map). The cavalry arrived at Dingaverge, led by Plar Rostal, a renowned fighter (11th level) and his leman, Seenia, a renegade (sylvan) elf (fighter/m-u/thief, 6th/6th/6th). Within a sennight, several thousand bandit horsemen had gathered, and with a force of over 7,500 cavalry, Rostal began aggressive probes north and northwest to locate the enemy. Bands of kobolds and unmounted bandit troops similarly prowled the nearer reaches of the Fellreev, for Rover wardog footmen, as well as elves had also been reported.

During the Dozenmonth of Reaping, CY 578, the remainder of the Hierarchs' army arrived at Dingaverge, spent a few days

resting and regrouping, and followed after Rostal, trying to make contact by means of the 2,000 or so horsemen who had joined them at the rendezvous.

The cavalry under Plar Rostal was far away, however — in hot pursuit of a enemy, or so they supposed. Rostal's pursuing force was drawn out on the steppes and then assaulted by a nomad horde of about equal numbers, nearly 1,000 of whom were centaurs lately joined with the Rovers nation against the enemies to the south. The Hierarchs' cavalry were severely handled and forced to break off the action, retiring to the northwest and allowing the Rovers and their allies to slip southwards to harass the approaching infantry force. This move was screened by no more than 1,000 horsemen and a few score of centaurs, enough of a force to make Rostal believe that the entire horde he had faced was following him. This ruse worked for several days, but as soon as it was discovered, the Plar's cavalry scattered the meager band of opponents and rode at all speed back toward where Rostal knew the following army of foot should be.

The commander of the Host of the Hierarchs was Hierarch Blontug, a much-feared half-orc of great power (cleric/fighter/assassin, 4th/9th/9th). He was wise enough not to march his footsoldier force into the vastness of the rolling plains, but instead used the western edge of the Fellreev Forest to cover the right flank of the northward-moving army. A screen of light cavalry scouts alerted the Hierarch that the enemy was approaching, and Blontug arrayed his troops along the edge of the woods so as to prevent cavalry maneuvers against it.

On that first day of contact there was only light skirmishing, as the Rovers and their allies probed for weaknesses, and the Hierarch in turn attempted to discover just how powerful an enemy he faced. On the next day, kobold and bandit scouts prevented an attack from the forest coming as a complete surprise. The attacking footmen and elves were easily repulsed,

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while the well-trained humanoid infantry, supported by missile troops and light horse, withstood several determined charges by the other contingent of the invaders. A stand-off of several days' duration ensued, with Blontug growing progressively more certain that his enemy was not numerous enough to be a real threat, but unable to bring them to battle because his force lacked sufficient mobility.

Then Rostal's cavalry rejoined the main body of the Host of the Hierarchs, and on Goodmonth 26, CY 578, the force rolled forward. The whole of the cavalry swung in an arc from the left flank. Its aim was to act as the hammer to the infantry's anvil. The movement was met by fierce rushes by the centaurs and the light horse of the Rovers, while the remainder of the nomads escaped to the northeast. A major victory was narrowly missed by the Hierarch, but his aim was accomplished. The allied force was beaten and driven off, although cavalry losses on the part of the Society were excessive, and the enemy had established itself firmly in the northern portion of the Fellreev. Before action could be commenced to remove this minor irritation, news came from Rookroost that the Zumker had been crossed in force by Duke Ehyeh, and the Tenhese were sweeping through the Bluff Hills to clear them of resistance before turning south toward the open country beyond. The normally independant and warring leaders of the Bandit Kingdoms had rapidly declared common cause against Tenh, and all the units with the Hierarchs' army rode off, despite the threats and imprecations of Blontug.

There was great wrath in Molag when the Unnameable Hierarch learned of all that had transpired. Blontug and Rostal were sent across the Ritensa to punish the bandits for deserting the Hierarchs' Host, and their force of about 10,000 horse and foot easily captured the lands of "General" Hok and Baron Oltagg of Wornhall. This territory abuts the Shield Lands and runs northward into the Fellreev, so there is some question as to its actual value to the Horned Society. Nevertheless, the Hierarchs now reign over it. The associated bandit leaders have renounced all dealings with the Society on this account, and their agents are said to be recruiting mercenary troops in Urnst County and from the border territory between Nyrond and the Pale. The Hierarchs, in turn, seem likely to continue eastward expansion in CY 579.

Bandit Kingdoms: The usual turmoil of competing states preying upon one another and any available neighbor outside the territory sums up activity within the area until CY 578. Bandit groups made forays into Tenh, the Pale, Nyrond, County Urnst, and even the Shield Lands and portions of Furryondy. Most groups were mounted, but the usual number of river raiders and buccaneers from Redhand plied the waters. Prince Zeech's ships and galleys actually staged a major action against the Duchy of Urnst, managing to slip in through the easternmost portion of the Cairn Hills, loot and pillage, and then escape with their gains. The western bandit lords — General Hok, Guardian of Warfields (fighter, 11th level); Oltagg, Baron of Wormhall (fighter/thief, 4th/9th); Kor, Rhelt of Abbarra (assassin, 10th level); and the Master of Freehold, Eab Huldor (magic-user, 9th level) — actively co-operated with the Hierarchs of the Horned Society. However, when the banners of Tenh crossed the Zumker River, laying waste the Barony of Groskopf, and then entered Fellands, the Combination of Free Lords summoned all members to arms to defend the east. When even the western states responded, the Hierarchs were enraged, for they needed the bandit troops to eject the nomad and Rover invaders from the Fellreev Forest and the steppes of the Opicm. In a punitive invasion, the Hierarchs' forces seized and occupied both Warfields and Wormhall. A very tenacious defense by the Abbarrish, reinforced by the survivors from the conquered territories, and scrapings from Tangles and the Freehold, caused the halt of the Society's penetration in the autumn of CY 578.

A truce was negotiated with the Duke of Tenh; Groskopf

ceded the land between the Griff Mountains and the Zumker to Tenh, and all of the Free Lords of the Combination swore to refrain from raiding Tenh. Thus freed of immediate warfare on their east, all of the leaders turned westward to confront the Horned Society, with the express aim of recovering the lost states and taking reprisals in addition. Recruiting of mercenaries and masterless men brought the forces under command of the Combination to the following totals in the spring of CY 579:

Warfields: Guardian General Hok (fighter, 11th level); Cavalry 300, infantry 500.

Wormhall: Baron Oltagg (fighter/thief, 4th/9th level); Cavalry 150, infantry 400, humanoids (gnolls) 100.

Freehold: Eab Huldor, Master of Freehold (magic-user, 9th level); Cavalry 350, infantry 800.

Kor: Rhelt Abbarra (assassin, 10th level); Cavalry 400, infantry 600.

Tangles: Earl Renyard (bard, 8th level — fighter/thief, 6th/7th level); Cavalry 200, infantry 550.

Rift: Plar Lintoff (thief, 13th level); Cavalry 150, infantry 350, humanoids (gnolls) 200, (bugbears) 50, (ogres) 10.

Reyhu: Tyrant Celdro (fighter, 10th level); Cavalry 300, infantry 700.

Redhand: Price Zeech (cleric/fighter, 5th/8th level); Cavalry 100, infantry 300.

Artonsamay: Duke Nebon Gellor (fighter, 9th level); Cavalry 250, infantry 250.

Stoink: Boss Dhaelhy (fighter/thief, 8th/5th level); Cavalry 200, infantry 650.

Dimre: Szek Winvid (cleric, 10th level); Cavalry 300, infantry 550.

Johrase: King Selnon (fighter, 11th level); Cavalry 350, infantry 550.

Midlands: Graf Venholtee (cleric/fighter, 3rd/7th level); Cavalry 200, infantry 450.

Greenkeep: Lord Yanboli (half-elf fighter/m-u/thief, 5th/5th/5th level); Cavalry 150, infantry 600.

Rookroost: Plar Teuod Fent (illusionist, 9th level); Cavalry 250, infantry 450.

Fellands: Avaerd, Lord Despot (fighter, 10th level); Cavalry 300, infantry 850, humanoids (orc guards) 100.

Groskopf: Baron Skiven (fighter, 11th level); Cavalry 150, infantry 300, humanoids (ogrillons) 50.

Totals: Cavalry 4,100; infantry 8,900; humanoids 510.

The above estimates are likely to increase by 10% to 20% due to last-minute recruiting and enlistments. The force is most dangerous because of the unusual concentration of high-level characters and their lieutenants.

Duchy of Tenh: In CY 575, Duke Ehyeh II began an active campaign to clear the Troll fens and border area on the west bank of the Yol. Considerable numbers of fortifications were built, and this two-year effort was deemed a general success. The Theocrat of the Pale concentrated his attentions south and eastwards because of the strong show by the Tennesse.

In 577, the Duke began early actions to the north, working into the mountains and fortifying the southern end of Rockegg Pass, some 20 leagues above Catbut. The Duke was himself killed in fighting against the Holders, whose units of "fists" resisted with great ferocity the closing of the pass. Despite the death of their leader, the Tennesse (now under Marshal Iaba) finished what their liege had willed, thus effectively securing the Duchy on two sides. At a convocation in Nevond Nevend during Neefest, 578, Ehyeh III was crowned Duke, and the Tennesse celebrated greatly. The old Duke's son was more warlike than his doughty father, and his early training as a fighter on the frontiers made Ehyeh III particularly anxious to secure all avenues against invasion. In the spring, the young Duke organized a force of 2,500 horse and 6,000 foot, while leaving strong garrisons at all key points. He personally led the army across the Zumker River.

Duke Ehyeh's plan was to sweep west to the junction of the

Bluff Hills and the Rakers. He then would move north into the hills, clear them in a rapid westward push, and garrison any strongholds found there. He would then swing back southeast to overrun the land between the Bluff Hills and the Zumker. Any bandit forces caught by the move would be trapped and destroyed. With this accomplished, the next move would be to bring a second force across the Zumker, just above the Artonsamay. The two would then handle expected bandit lord reaction, take Rookroost, and secure all of the territory as far west as the Fellreev. Contemplated along with these actions was an even more ambitious plan to begin the next year, which would secure all the land west of the Artonsamayas far as the Tangles.

The plan worked with precision, but as soon as the Theocrat got wind of it — and his spy system is legendary — disturbing reports began to reach the young Duke. The Prelate's growing military strength was at Wintershriven, and the Faithful Bands were being called up. The Tennesse companies originally being readied for action elsewhere were sent from Redspan on a long march to reinforce the Yol. Woodsmen were ordered to keep a close watch in the Phostwood Forest. The Duke entrusted the army in action against the bandit states to the redoubtable Marshal laba so the new threat could be under his own command. When the Combination of Free Lords sued for peace near mid-summer, the suit was welcomed, for it ceded a considerable portion of land to the Duchy, guaranteed bandit neutrality, and allowed the Tennesse military forces to meet the threat now posed by the Pale. Duke Ehyeh brought a combined army of 4,000 horse and 11,000 foot across the Yol at the edge of Phostwood in Dozenmonth Ready'reat, 578 CY. This host struck east and is wintering in the Pale. The threat to Wintershriven is obvious, and events of the year 579 should prove interesting indeed. Ehyeh III (ranger, 11th level) will either be acclaimed as a military genius and savior of his nation, or else Tenh will fall under the heel of the Theocrat.

Rovers of the Barrens: The young tribesmen who matured into warriors during the last two generations avoided their old battling and hunting grounds along the Fellreev Forest and the plains of the Duls, for they feared the might of luz's hordes. Instead, these nomads and woodland hunters withdrew to the steppes and other sites to the north and east. Their numbers increased, and they practiced their fighting skills against the men of the Hold of Stonefist and the savages and humanoids they met on raids into the Cold Marshes. Despite the difficulties of communication, the western tribes of the Rovers of the Barrens actually made alliances with the Wegwiur. In 566 there were a few light raids into the northeastern edge of the Fellreev. In a few years, wardog parties were reported in the forest west of Cold Run. By CY 577, a conclave of all the clans staged a great beast hunt in the central portion of their territory, with many visiting Wolf Nomads taking part in the sport. The census sticks showed that clan warrior strength was as follows:

Great Stags	5,200	11 tribes; eastern area
Bear Paws	1,150,	4 tribes; southeastern area
Red Horses	2,700	6 tribes; northwestern area
Black Horses	3,350	8 tribes; northwestern area
Gray Lynx	1,450	5 tribes; northern woodlands area
Horn Bows	1,800	4 tribes; west central area
Sly Foxes	850,	4 tribes; southern woodlands area
Wardogs	3,100	fighting society; all tribes
White Wardogs	950	fighting society; north tribes only

Tribes not attending probably accounted for about 2,000 additional warriors, while allied northern peoples number almost 4,000 additional warriors.

At the great conference, the Rovers agreed to a plan to make war upon the Horned Society to attempt to regain their lost territory around the Opicm and in the Fellreev. The help of the Wolf Nomads was not promised, but the Rover tribes knew it would certainly come if possible. The Sly Fox Clan, always on

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good terms with the sylvan elves of the Fellreev Forest, were to harass the enemy from the woodlands, while the western clans, the Red Horse, Black Horse, and Horn Bows, rode south and made war upon the hated peoples of the Horned Society. Chada-Three-Lances (fighter, 8th level) was made War Sachem, and in the spring of 578, he led some 6,000 warriors on a campaign to accomplish the recovery of the lost lands. With the force went a party of about 900 centaur warriors. The latter had been displaced from their territory in and around the western end of the Fellreev, so they were more than eager to take part.

The warfare was at first easy; many of the enemy were slain and their villages sacked and burned. But as the Rovers moved further south, they met greater resistance. Then word of an approaching enemy body of cavalry caused the Rovers to pull back and go into council. The bulk of wardog soldiers were sent into the Fellreev to aid the Sly Foxes and their allies. Companies were also sent away with the loot and prisoners already captured, so that the remaining band would not be encumbered. With the Wolf Nomads who had recently joined, the warriors then numbered 7,000 plus some 900 centaurs. These troops savaged the cavalry from the Horned Society and sent it flying away. The Rovers feigned pursuit and instead sent about 6,000

raiders back south to finish their destruction, but before any real penetration of enemy territory could be made, a large army of footmen was located. These humans and humanoids were attacked, but they easily withstood the clan assaults despite some heavy losses. The whole attack was then called off when scouts detected enemy cavalry moving to encircle their encampment. In a nip-and-tuck retreat, the whole force managed to escape with losses considerably less than those of their enemy. The Sly Foxes and their elven allies had been quite successful in gaining the initiative in the Fellreev. Expected countermoves failed to materialize, and now many tribes of the Gray Lynx and Wolverine clans have moved into the woodlands. (The Wolverines are a Central Woodlands clan which was driven north and was not represented at the great conference. There are seven tribes in the clan, but each has only about 100 warriors.) Scattered and disaffected tribes are likewise returning due to the minor successes gained, and it is likely that the councils of 579 will see a larger number of warriors ready and willing to take up the lance and go against the enemy. If continued cooperation between the Rovers clans and the Wolf Nomads persists, even luz could be in trouble.

Stay tuned for more next issue!

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The Monsters of Minaria

by Glenn Rahman

Hamahara the Air Dragon

Just how Hamahara came to Minaria remains a matter of speculation, since Air Dragons are native to the continent of Reiken and have never been known to cross expansive oceans under their own power. If Hamahara's own story is to be believed (and if the scholar Iudeu has understood it correctly), Air Dragons had for a long while served the kings of Reiken. These monarchs knew powerful "calling spells" by which an Air Dragon might be summoned, once every so many years, and bound to serve the bidding of the caller for a few months' time. It was one of these kings — Qarmesh of Burev — who dispatched Hamahara to Minaria, via a huge barge, as a goodwill gift to Nibagisis, the Lloroi emperor in Niiawee. The emperor was pleased to receive such a servant and appointed Hamahara an officer of his realm.

Since Air Dragons are orderly and courteous creatures, Nibagisis allowed his servant the freedom of his kingdom — only charging Hamahara to come to the empire's aid as the need warranted. Such an occasion soon came — the revolt of the Scarlet Witch King. The wyrm acquitted itself well against the armies and conjured monsters that the Witch King formed.

After the Cataclysm destroyed the Lloroi Empire, none were left to speak the Air Dragon calling spell. A period of total freedom lay ahead for the dragon. According to the Hothiorian scholar Iudeu, who interviewed Hamahara and collected its lore, the Air Dragon lost its home in the catastrophe and had to search over the crumbled and smoking landscapes for another. As it sought a new resting place, the wyrm's passage was watched from the ground — by the astonished survivors of the holocaust.

To give these early Minarians their due, Hamahara is an astonishing sight. The dragon is as long as some small cities are wide. Its scaly armor is so reflective that the dragon seems to turn color as a different light shines upon it. Its neck is spined behind the head, and a sturdy horn grows out of the top of its reptilian skull. A shorter horn is located between its nostrils, while a beard of tentacles decorates its chin. The Air Dragon's feet are four-toed and have such a reach that one foot can seize an entire tower as easily as a man might grasp a bottle. Hamahara has two great, ribbed wings, but naturalists do not understand how the dragon can fly by these. Moreover, the creature is intelligent and able to communicate by means of thought



transference. Certainly there must be something of magic in the Air Dragon from Reiken.

The men of the post-Cataclysm mistook Hamahara for a supernatural creature. In some areas the wyrm became a god in the pantheons of awed barbarians.

After years of searching, Hamahara located a home upon an ancient mountain that had defied the shattering power of the Cataclysm. The Goblins, who were to drift down into the newly risen Nithmere Mountains when the area stabilized, always treated their titanic neighbor with studied respect. They called Hamahara's snowy mountain *Ngyuen Moeshter* (Winter Rest) and gave it a wide berth.

For the first few centuries after the Cataclysm, Hamahara ranged widely, devouring whole forests in its preparation for hibernation. The hundreds of Air Dragon legends that fill the folklore of Minaria probably derive from sightings of Hamahara during this period. But finally the wyrm retired to its rest and was seen no more. Iudeu reckons that Hamahara's hibernation began in the middle of the sixth century.

Centuries passed, and though the Air Dragon calling spell had been forgotten in Minaria since the destruction of Niiawee, the chief sorcerer of Reiken — the lord of the Luwamnas — still preserved it on a scroll. In the looting and confusion that followed the fall of the last of the Luwamnas, this scroll fell into the hands of Mivorian scholars. It was brought to Minaria where — since it was considered to have historical value only — the archon of Mivior donated it to the library of the Invisible School of Thaumaturgy. There, when it was performed on rare occasion as an intellectual exercise, the

sleeping Hamahara did not hear it. As it happened, not many months after Hamahara had awakened from long hibernation, a magic student at the school was practicing his incantations with the use of the supposedly harmless scroll. To his shock, an Air Dragon did appear, darkening the skies like some great nimbus cloud. Hastily the student bade the monster go away in peace.

The ruling committee of the school was delighted to learn such powerful charm was at their beck and call. They moved the scroll to the vault where their strongest magic was stored, intending that Hamahara should be a weapon for no one but their magical brotherhood.

Alas, before enough time had passed to make the Air Dragon subject to the spell again, the Elven general Droncain sacked the school. He took that scroll and many others besides back to Ider Bolis. The Elves failed to benefit either, for all too soon an alliance of their enemies sacked the city and distributed its loot between its members. The calling spell was recognized for what it was and, lest fighting break out for possession of it, a copy was given to each of the kings present.

Thus, since that day, the great wyrm Hamahara has become the common weapon of Minarian nations at war. What the Air Dragon thinks of this state of affairs, it has never said. We think, however, that it must look forward to its next hibernation and a few centuries of peace and quiet.

Urmoff the Sea Serpent

The oldest stories of the Sea Serpent race come from the Trolls, who believed that they were a kind of Trollish fairy folk
(Continued on 3rd following page)

Crudely carved mossy steps lead down...down...down...
until darkness swallows them. Chills run up your spine as you
begin your descent.

Suddenly—you are struck from behind! You fall endlessly;
cruelly tumbling down rough-hewn steps...

You awaken with a start. A torch flickers above you, dimly
illuminating an impenetrable door. From the blackness comes a
menacing low hiss and the rasp of scales sliding on stones...



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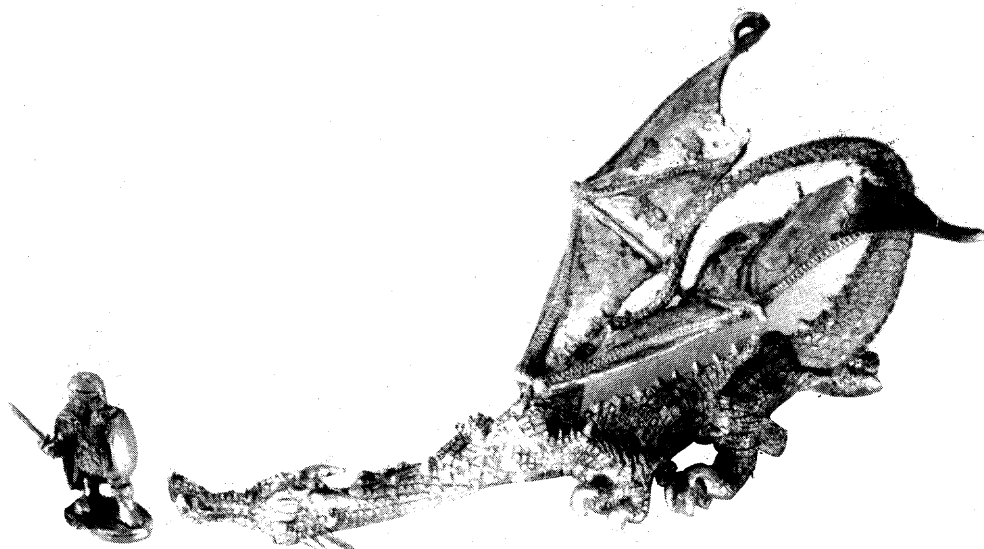
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in disguise. The human seafarers of Minaria are not so romantic in their tales. For example, in his memoir of a seagoing life, the Mivorian Neshub Musruma tells a chilling yarn of a ship doomed by a Sea Serpent attack.

In the fall of 1319, Musruma's ship sighted a derelict with straining topmasts hanging tangled in the shrouds and sails loosened and blowing like a phantom's sheets. The only man left aboard was the lookout, tied to a high mast, dead, with gulls tearing at his flesh. When Musruma and his companions boarded the vessel and read the captain's log, they found a strange tale written. An excerpt reads: "I don't know how many are left; Elbour on the mast stopped screaming two days ago. I have not been out of my cabin since the Sea Serpent came at us in the fog. Seven men are dead that I know of. Tukultae deliver us!"

The narrator goes on to describe the Sea Serpent's watch over the deck, days of patient waiting for further victims. Maddened by hunger and thirst, the besieged captain concludes: "I haven't heard or seen the creature since last night. I pray to Tukultae that it is gone. I must get to the water barrels or I perish anyway. Better a quick and merciful death than a slow one of thirst..."

Testimony such as this places Sea Serpents in a very bad light, but most

known cases of Sea Serpent attacks have been provoked by their victims. The venom of the creature is much sought after by sorcerers and alchemists. Large boats sometimes 'hunt Sea Serpents on the high seas, slaying small ones with harpoons.

According to natural history scholars, the Sea Serpent is an intelligent creature who lives in deep water but must come to sheltered coves to spawn. In Minaria the spawning area is Serpent Bay.

Holopaus of Boran, who studied the bay at first hand, found that one male guards the spawning grounds for decades at a time. Usually the great male and the smaller females do not menace ships which call on the bay. However, in the winter — spawning time — Sea Serpent tempers are short and no wise captain will take his ship into Serpent Bay. For this reason no port town has developed on its shore.

Sea Serpents can grow as large as a warship. They have fanlike sails on their backs and fleshy fins on their necks. A Sea Serpent's muzzle is long and wields a double row of teeth. Feeding tentacles, each several feet long, writhe on both its upper and lower jaws. The serpentine body ends in a supple forked tail.

Sea Serpents are able to communicate with other races by means of sign language, through the movement of their

feeding tentacles. The Trolls learned the art of communicating with the creatures first, and established good relations with them. This friendship served them in good stead when Mivior tried to seize the Trolls' territory; their allies bedeviled the humans' supply ships and warships until a peace was concluded.

More often, Sea Serpents have gone to war in their own behalf. When the Minarian seafarers began hunting them for venom, the creatures warred grimly upon the offending nations' shipping. Formal agreements to respect one another's lives were drawn up between the serpents and the humans, the guardian male of Serpent Bay acting as an ambassador to Minaria for these negotiations. In return for the guarantee of a safe haven within Serpent Bay, the Sea Serpents agreed to restrain and punish members of their own kind which made unprovoked attacks upon humans. By this time Sea Serpent sign language was an art known to many of the most experienced diplomats of Minaria.

Since war is so much on the minds of Minarians, it is to be expected that its governments regularly attempt to ally the Sea Serpents when naval conflict breaks out. How successfully these embassies fare depends largely on the personality of the guardian of Serpent Bay. In the eleventh century, the Serpent Va-

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simir had a consuming lust for native copper — of value to his kind — and pledged himself to the largest briber. Analzak, in the twelfth century, was a saturnine creature who would not involve himself or his kind in the causes of other races. Muslusard in the thirteenth century would lend his aid only to his personal favorites, the people of Zefnar.

For the last thirty years, the bay has been protected by the magnificent Urmoff. He cares little for bribes, but is something of an intellectual with an inordinate interest in continental politics. It is said that Urmoff enjoys the opportunity to listen to ambassadors and ask informed questions about current events. It is a rare war, however, when Urmoff does not finally make up his mind and glide out to the open sea, where he gathers warlike volunteers for his enterprise. The sight of the undulating humps of a school of Sea Serpents can throw an entire enemy warfleet into panic or inspire their allies with new hope.

Ogsbogg the Ogre

The pre-Cataclysmic histories of the ancient Lloroi Empire contain only a few mentions of the Ogre race. Seemingly they had always been foes of the Imperial state, never encompassed within its vast territories. Travelers have described the ruins of an ancient wall running north and south in the Great Forest of Neuth. Here the Lloroi emperors had deployed their garrisons, ever watchful of the savage hordes that roamed beyond the fortifications. The empire was either unable or unwilling to begin a war of subjugation with the Ogre kind.

The great Cataclysm cannot have much altered their barbarous way of life. The earliest post-Cataclysmic tales of the Ogres come from the Elves and the Miviorians. The latter tell a story of their ancestors, who came from the continent of Reiken, fleeing the sorcerous Luwamnas. After a long, storm-tossed voyage, their first landfall brought them to the Ogreland coast.

Exhausted by the perilous crossing, the refugees poled eagerly ashore and set up camp. To replenish their depleted provisions, they sent Lord Gattusil, a brave young nobleman, and ten others to forage in the hills beyond the beach.

As they went inland, the foragers discovered large footprints in the sand, as well as a roasting pit large enough to cook an ox. They started back to warn their people, but it was too late. Before they reached the shore, a dozen Ogres thundered out of the brush and attacked the refugees.

Lord Gattusil ordered his men to make a clamor and to send their hunting arrows into the backs of the giants. The distraction worked, and the enraged Ogres pursued them into the thickets. Meanwhile, the refugees had time to re-

gain their boats and pole out to the moored ships. The ships waited for a time, as Ogres glowered menacingly from the shore, but they saw no signal from the group of foragers and at last elected to sail away from the loathsome coast.

Leima, a noblewoman betrothed to Gattusil, heard the decision to abandon him with despair. Rather than be bereft of her lover, she leaped into the sea. The legend says she was turned into a bird by the pity of the god Tukultae, and flew to shore crying endlessly, "Gattusil, Gattusil, Gattusil!" Others say Leima was drowned, or that she indeed swam to shore where, romantics hope, she returned to the arms of her beloved. Mivostill commemorate the tragic loss on the Ogreland coast by eating a repast of stale sea provisions and by releasing a bird called the "leima."

Others who have seen Ogres have been as impressed as the early Miviorians were. An Ogre stands twice as tall as even the mighty Trolls. Their bodies are stout and so filled out with hard muscles that their hide seems to be stuffed with stones and cables. Their skin is pale, their scalp bald, their ears pointed and their eyes yellow. Their man-crushing jaws look a size too large for their heads. The tribal Ogre wears a simple kilt made out of the skin of some large animal. His



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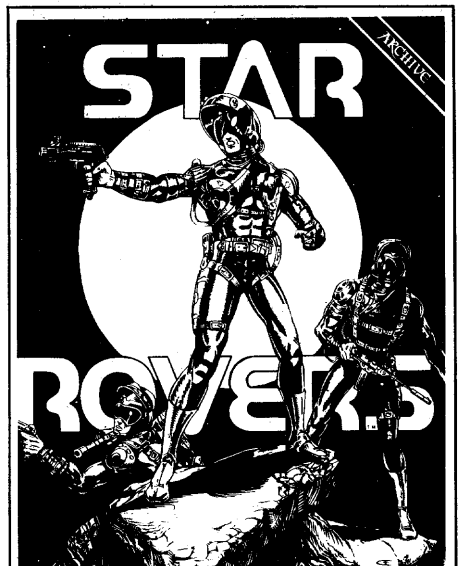
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weapons are crude: thrown stones, heavy spears and weighty clubs. No scholar has studied them in their own country, but obviously the Ogre craves meat above all other foods—though he will eat moss and wild fruit when it is in season.

Elfland's main authority on Ogres, Diarnan, has identified three main groups of Ogres — the Goleuddydd (Skull Crushers), the Ynyslannog (Flesh Maulers) and the Maenystad (Bone Mashers). These wander widely about western Minaria. Some border areas do not see an Ogre for years; at other times, more than one tribe threatens to spill out into Minaria proper.

The natural habitat of the Ogres is hilly shrub country. They dislike thick woods, and perhaps this is why nearby Elfland has had so little trouble with its ferocious neighbors over its long history. Reports filed by border patrols have often blamed Ogres for slaughtering livestock, destroying homes and carrying off Elves, but nowhere have Ogre attacks reached as far as Lake Melting Star. The harm the Ogres have done Elfland is more indirect. The Elves say that humans formerly lived on the fringe of Cir-dalriada (western Minaria). But as the Ogre population increased, they warred on these tribesmen and forced them to migrate east. One of these groups, the Sion Hac, conquered Elfland in the reign of Dalan and

harshly dominated it for four generations.

The Ogres themselves would be a formidable conquering army, if they could bury tribal animosities and unite against their eastern neighbors. Fortunately for Minaria, when Ogres of one tribe met Ogres of another, blood flows. Even so, individual tribes have made a few destructive raids eastward. In the eleventh century, the Goleuddydd destroyed Addat. The stories of atrocities collected by the scholar Mosinon of Mivior are truly horrifying. Nearly a century passed after the raid before Addat regained its old population and prosperity.

Undoubtedly, the Ogres most familiar to Minarians are the mercenary giant Ogsbogg and his followers. Since his youth, Ogsbogg stood out as an uncommonly reasonable Ogre. It is said that the young Ogsbogg encountered Elven fur trappers on the borders of Cir-dalriada and, instead of attacking them, entered into friendly relations. He learned their language and drifted into a trading relationship. He would gather the pelts of the furred beasts of OGREland and trade them to the Elves for the type of tawdry gewgaws favored by his people. The elders of his tribe—the Ynyslannog — censured his unseemly conduct, but Ogsbogg's innovations found favor with a group of younger, free-thinking Ogres.

Then came Boewenn's War. Some of

Ogsbogg's trading friends called at their accustomed meeting place, but now they were soldiers in the Elven army and interested in something other than furs. They had sized up Ogsbogg as a formidable engine of war and offered him the opportunity to see the world beyond Cir-dalriada. After all, he could do what the Goleuddydd still boasted that they had done long ago, they argued.

Ogsbogg agreed to accompany the Elves. At the siege of Addat, the Ogre's skill at pulling down ramparts with the aid of a mighty ship's anchor on a long chain contributed much to the easy capture of the city.

Although the Elven High Prince Boewenn despised other races, Ogsbogg's service at Addat impressed his opportunistic side. He equated the Ogre with a useful trained warbeast and did not scruple to send him to General Droncain, who was preparing to attack the Invisible School of Thaumaturgy.

Ogsbogg did not care for Boewenn's imperious attitude but did enjoy civilized warfare. He even recruited other Ogres for the coming campaign and led them to the High Marches. Once Droncain's mages removed the protective spell from the school of the Eaters of Wisdom, the Ogre troop breached the wall with a gigantic battering ram.

Eventually Boewenn was defeated and Ogsbogg returned to the anger of his tribe. The elders were scandalized by his sale of his strength and his corruption of impressionable companions. Banished from Cir-dalriada, he set up camp in the petrified forest of Stump Hole Valley. Since then he has gathered a band of like-thinking Ogres around him and has sold his services to most of the kings of Minaria at one time or another.

Ogsbogg's example has brought some small change to OGREland. Envyng his success, some maverick bands of Ogres have, been enticed into auxiliary service with civilized armies. These occasions continue to be rare, however, and to date few ambassadors have had the courage to risk life and limb among the blood-thirsty brutes.

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The operator hesitated briefly, then handed the headset to the major. "No need, sir. She's on the line for you..."

"Afternoon, Major. Brit Intel informs me that Mad Merc has taken over the protectorate."

"Yes, ma'am," choked the major. "The Japanese and the Americans will be informed."

"See what you can do about getting it back. The Admiralty doesn't want to be involved. I'll call you in three days."

The major handed back the headset. It was going to be a long night, to be followed by three days that would seem all too short....

General introduction

So begins **Operation Mad Merc**, also known as "The Mercenary Atoll Mission," an adventure designed for use with the TOP SECRET™ game rules. The adventure is presented as a sequel to *Doctor Yes* (The Floating Island Mission), which was printed in issue #48 of DRAGON™ magazine. It can be played as a sequel to the first mission, or can easily be used as a mission in and of itself. The adventure is suitable for any number of players (agents) up to eight.

A reconnaissance briefing which follows will serve to give agents a solid background of information. Players may

use their own pre-generated characters for this mission, and will be allowed to bring along any equipment they can afford which they deem necessary.

Reconnaissance briefing

Alulu Island is located in the west central Pacific Ocean, about 1,000 miles south of Japan between the Ryukyu Islands and the Bonin Islands just north of the Tropic of Cancer. It is an independent atoll not associated with any island chain. The small (less than a mile in diameter from outer shore to outer shore) island is outside the domain of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and is under "unofficial" protection of the British government. British missionaries maintain an outpost on the island which also serves as a weather station.

Although the island is politically inactive and neutral and of little (if any) importance strategically, it has apparently become a pawn in a competition of international influence. Recently, a force of mercenaries assembled from the survivors of central African and Latin American campaigns descended upon the island. Shortly after this became known, all contact with the island (via a radio in the missionary outpost) was cut off. It is believed that Lt. Col. Martin Strikewell, commonly known as Mad Merc, is the organizer of this invasion.

In the aftermath of World War II, Strikewell was discharged from the British Army after an incident in which many innocent civilians were killed. Since that time he has kept a very low profile; rumor has it that he has served as a mercenary

in military actions around the world. Most recently, he is suspected to be the person responsible for the silencing of Alulu Island.

Direct military intervention in this matter is not recommended until reliable intelligence is received from the island. The primitive native population of something more than 100 individuals may be under forcible detention, and their lives as well as the lives of the missionaries may be jeopardized if military action is attempted.

Your mission is to investigate the island and its surroundings to determine whether or not the native population is under duress, and to ascertain what Mad Merc's intentions are. You are *NOT* to take offensive action against the mercenary force, since this may endanger innocent bystanders. You should either report your findings by radio to an off-shore military vessel, or report in person to military officials after disembarking the island.

Agents may approach the island in any fashion they deem appropriate. It is recommended that a surreptitious submarine approach be made under cover of darkness, with agents swimming in from the sub or paddling in with inflatable rafts. If a daytime approach is chosen or becomes necessary, agents should appear as (perhaps) natives in an outrigger, a team of scientists in a research vessel, or tourists in need of boat repairs.

Player/agents who intend to accept this mission should read no further. The information on the following pages is for the Administrator's eyes only!

MAD MERC

FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR'S EYES ONLY

Administrator memoranda

The only other information player/agents should receive at the start of the mission, aside from the briefing on the previous page, is the player map of Alulu Island on the back page of this module. None of the information on the other maps and floor plans herein should be revealed to agents until their activities warrant such action. Drawings and diagrams which are provided as part of the description of a specific item or device may be shown to agents at the proper time, and should be revealed if there is any confusion over the physical appearance of the item in question.

Agents should provide the Admin with the exact time and location of their arrival into the mapped area. This information is necessary so that non-player character locations may be determined, weather conditions verified, and tidal depths ascertained. Agents should be aware that leaving the area defined by the Admin's map of the island will end the mission for that agent — and the same is true of any island personnel who venture that far away.

In similar fashion, agents should precisely specify points of attack on the outside of the horseshoe complex. Exactly where an explosive charge is planted, or exactly where a cut is made in a bulkhead, can have a bearing on internal flooding which can be harmful to personnel and to hardware.

If the agents are operating with a strict drop-off and pick-up schedule (as they should be), you should be aware of details such as the exact time and place the drops/pickups are to be made. This information may affect sighting, moment of detection, strategy of defense, and direction of pursuit if the invaders are detected by security devices.

Island description

Note: Much of the information in this section will become "obvious" to agents as they approach the island, set foot on it, and/or investigate their surroundings. The Admin should freely dole out information about the physical nature of the island once agents are in a location where simple observation would reveal the information to one standing at that place. Note that this does not pertain to such things as geological information (if agents haven't done any digging) and information about, for instance, the depth of the lagoon (if agents haven't done any diving).

Alulu Island (see Admin's map on fac-

ing page) is an oblong coral atoll which almost encircles a shallow lagoon. There is a thin layer of topsoil inland, away from the sandy, wave-pounded beaches. On the southwestern side of the isle, waves have carved a wide inlet which connects the ocean with the lagoon. On the northern side of the island, a shallow channel of water divides the island at high tide, but the channel disappears at low tide and a sandbar three feet above the surface of the water rises in its place.

In recent months, the eastern part of the lagoon has been deepened by excavation, and a channel has been dug through to deeper water across the northeast part of the island. These alterations are not represented on the agents' map and will not become known to the agents until they arrive on (or fly over) the scene.

The excavation and subsequent construction have created (among other things) a sea floor in the northeastern area of the lagoon which is 150 feet below the surface. The natural floor of the lagoon is about 50 feet beneath the surface at its lowest point. The undersea topography lines on the Administrator's map mark off the water depth in increments of roughly 10 feet apiece. If an exact determination of water depth at a certain spot must be made, remember to take into account the five-foot difference between high and low tide.

Alulu has a tropical climate, with uniform temperatures ranging from 70° to 80° F. Winds generally blow from southwest to northeast at 5-10 mph. During May through December there is a 75% chance of a midday (2 p.m.) violent downpour lasting for five minutes, followed by rapidly clearing skies and brilliant sunshine. There is a 1% chance each day that a typhoon will strike, with winds of more than 75 mph. If a typhoon strikes, large trees will be snapped off or uprooted; buildings may be demolished and will certainly be damaged; and waves will swamp the island, washing anyone on the outer beaches into the sea.

The reef encircling the lagoon is composed mostly of limestone and covered with bright and colorful coral. The beaches are sandy but narrow; beyond the shore, the landscape slopes sharply upward. The inland part of the reef, although only a few dozen feet wide at best, resembles a tropical forest. The soil is thin and poor for farming, but substantial enough to support many growths of coconut palms. There are no streams or other regular sources of fresh water; rain

water "soaks" through to the limestone base fairly promptly after each rainfall. There are some small caves in the limestone and some depressions in the surface which would hold water for at least 24 hours after a rainfall, but these irregularities in the surface are not extensive.

The natives rely on the coconut palms for many of the necessities of life—food, building material, fiber, and copra (dried coconut meat) rich in oil. Tangled vines and low brush cover the inland area where the palm groves do not. Natives also eat pandanus (screwpine) fruit, which grows in some abundance. Native wildlife includes colorful birds, many kinds of insects, and an occasional small pack of wild dogs or pigs.

The shaded area around the shore of the island represents the area which lies under water at high tide but which is exposed at low tide. (Note that both the agents' map and the Admin's map contain this information, but that the agents' map is incomplete in some respects.) At high tide, the outer line represents the place at which waves will break before rolling up toward the beach.

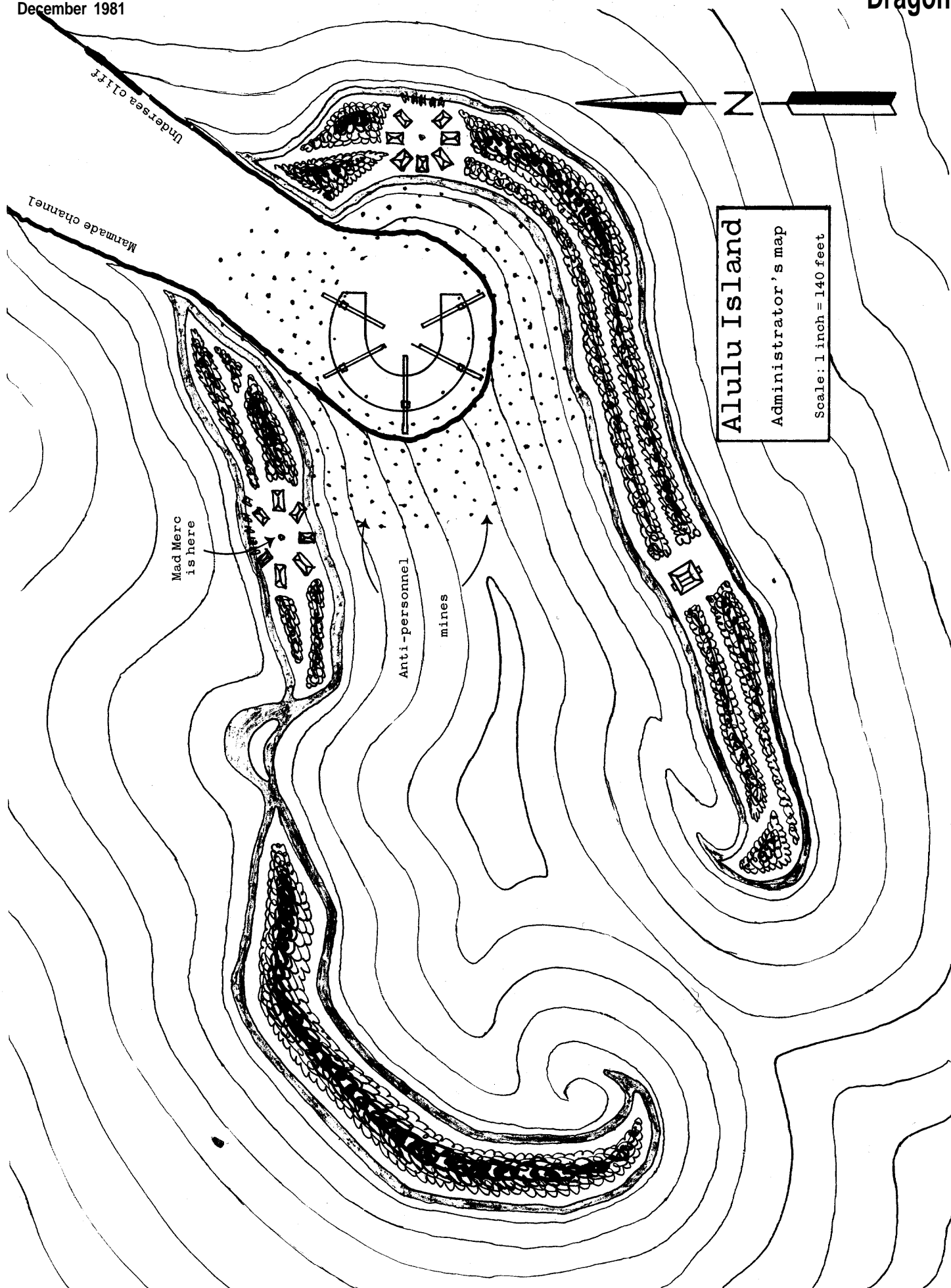
There is a difference of five feet between the water level at low tide and at high tide. When the tide is out, the north and west sections of the island are joined by a curved corridor of sand which is three feet above water level at its highest point. (At high tide, the same corridor lies two feet beneath the surface.)

High tide occurs at 11 a.m. and 11 p.m., and low tide occurs at 5 a.m. and 5 p.m. each day. During each six-hour period between the extremes, the water level rises or falls at a regular rate (slightly less than one foot per hour).

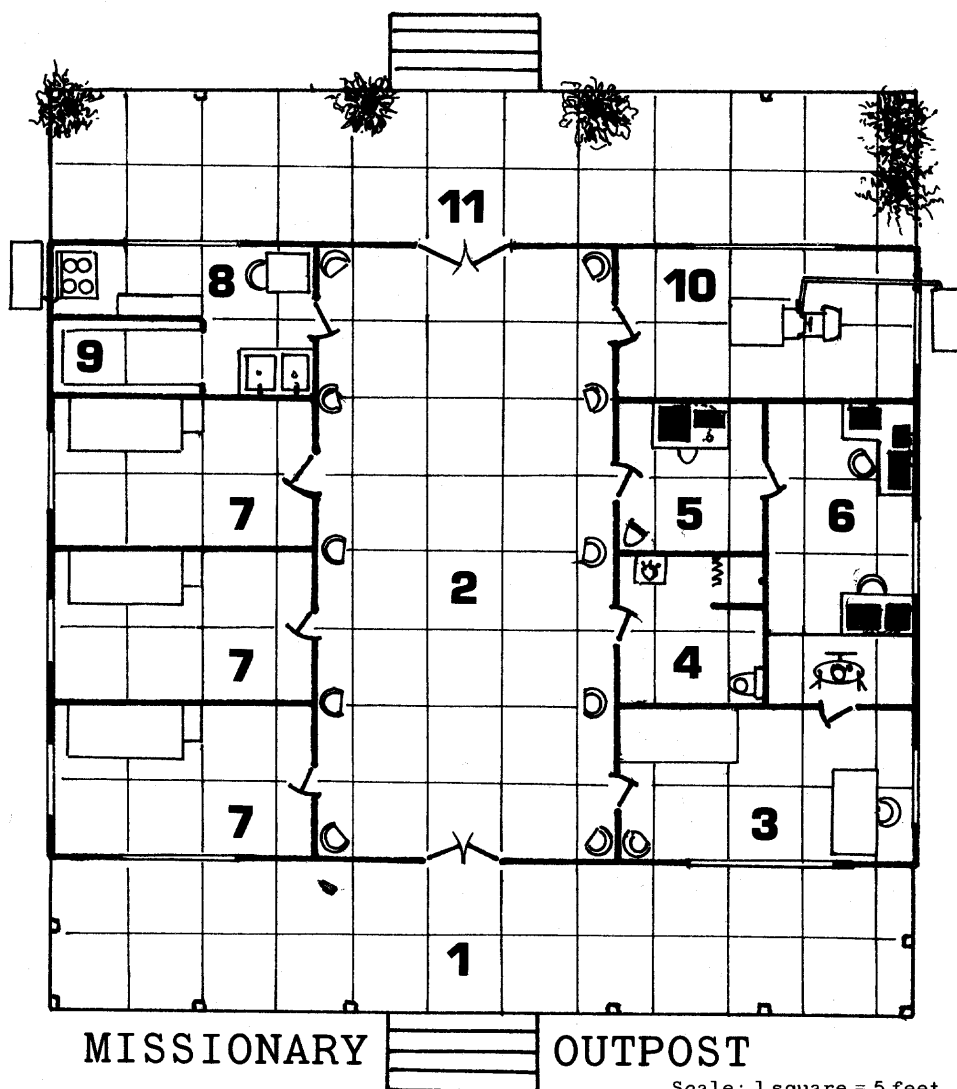
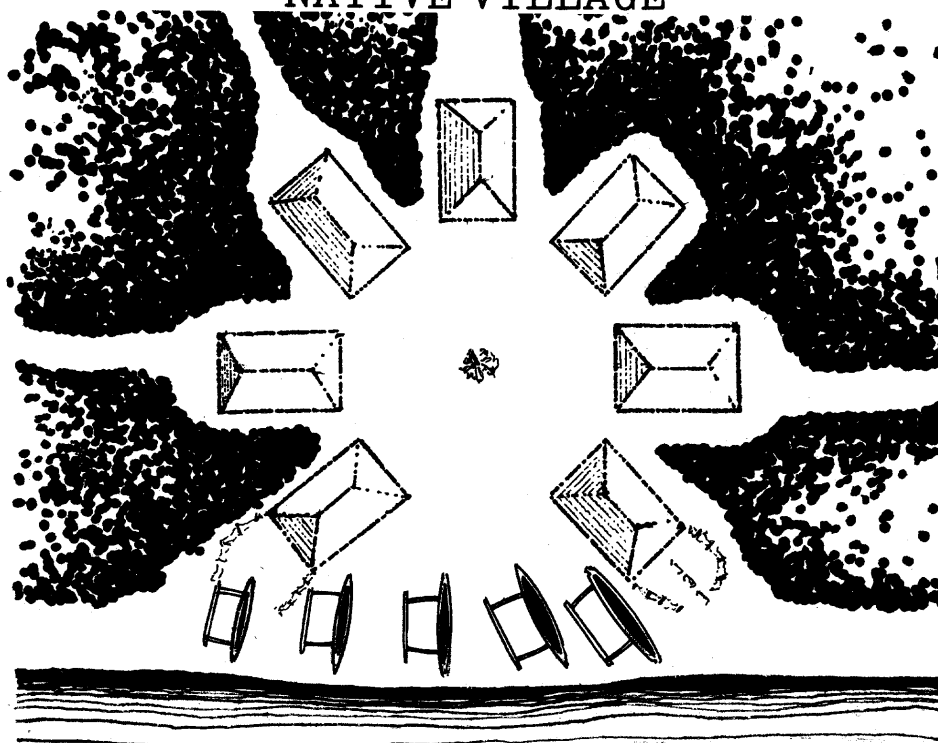
Alulu Island lies in the midst of the Japan Current, which flows toward the northeast. Rip tides at the inner edges of the southwest channel may confuse and tire swimmers headed for shore against the current. The speed of the current is about 2 mph (3 ft/sec) in general, although the water moves somewhat faster when passing through one of the gaps in the reef.

The native population

The Micronesians living on Alulu Island have light brown skin, black hair (straight or curly) and Oriental features. There are an estimated 140 natives on the island, each living in one of two villages which are essentially identical. Note that the actual native population is somewhat larger than the "official" estimate known by the agents — and the



NATIVE VILLAGE



agents are also initially unaware of the existence of the second native village, since it does not appear on the agents' map, which is reproduced on the last page of this module.

Most natives speak a rare tongue particular to this island from the Malayo-Polynesian language group. Because of the influence of the British missionaries, a few children and some young adults have a simple knowledge of English. A few of the island's residents may also speak Japanese. Some of the islanders have been introduced to Christianity, but the majority still fervently worship the forest or the sea. Celebrations such as births or marriages are celebrated by dancing, singing, feasting, game-playing, and story-telling.

The men make a living by fishing with nets and by selling copra to occasional buyers. A few of the wealthier islanders wear European- or American-style clothing, and some of them have garments of cloth. Native clothing is made from fiber.

The men design and build outrigger canoes with triangular sails which can carry up to eight man-sized paddlers. The fishing in the area is good, and the people are a peaceful and leisurely lot. If the islanders are approached in friendship, are pressed for information, and can be understood, agents will learn that (in the parlance of the natives) on some nights a great round house rises from the water. It sometimes frightens women and children with screams and growls and the sound of many heartbeats.

The missionary outpost

The missionaries' building is a small wood-frame house on the south side of the island. In addition to their missionary work, the churchmen keep weather records and often provide medical assistance to the islanders.

1) Front porch: This once-beautiful veranda is marred by signs of damage and forced entry. The front door is hanging on one hinge, three-quarters open.

2) Main hall: This area appears to have been used as a triage area/emergency room/waiting area for the natives needing medical attention. Ten empty wooden chairs are lined up around the walls, and the walls are pockmarked in several places by what look like bullet holes.

3) Infirmary: The word "Infirmary" is printed on the door in English. The door has been kicked open, and the room has apparently been ransacked. There is a mounted human skeleton in the closet. The room may once have contained other furniture, but all that remains now is an examining table, one chair, and a desk with its drawers pulled out and emptied.

4) Bath: A toilet, sink and shower take up most of the space in this room. There is, however, no running water. The lid

and handle of the toilet are wired to a trap which will go off if someone attempts to use the facility. Moving the handle or lifting the lid will activate a smoke grenade which is concealed outside the house beneath the window to the weather room (see below). The grenade will spew out a thick cloud of orange smoke which, within 5 minutes after being activated, will rise high enough to be visible from anywhere else on the island or the surface of the lagoon. (The grenade was rigged by the intruders who ransacked the outpost as a signal which would reveal the presence of unwanted visitors, on the assumption that a native would not bother to attempt to operate the toilet but a "civilized" person might.)

5) Radio room: What's left of a radio and a simple transmitter are scattered about this room. The few pieces of electronic equipment here have all been mangled by gunfire. Two chairs are overturned on the floor.

6) Weather room: The words "Meteorological Office" are printed on the door to this room in English. The door has been smashed open. Radar equipment, a barometer, a hygrometer, a wind gauge, a weather vane, and a radio are all stored or housed in this room, and all of these devices are intact and able to be operated — except that the radio needs electricity. Inside the radio (45/05) in a compartment is a hidden walkie-talkie unit which is operational and functioning.

7) Bedrooms: Each of these rooms has a bed with springs and mattress but no sheets, blankets or pillows. The rooms are devoid of furniture except for a footlocker at the foot of each bed. Each footlocker is unlocked and empty.

8) Kitchen: All of the cabinet drawers and cupboards are empty. The refrigerator and sink do not operate. Garbage is rotting in a waste can. The stove and oven, fueled by oil, will operate if the pilot light on the stove is re-lit (Home Economics AOK of more than 50).

9) Pantry: Empty shelves line all the walls of this room.

10) Diesel generator room: This generator was used to produce electricity for the building. It is not working at the moment, but it can be re-started by an agent with AOK of more than 50 in Mechanical Engineering. There are three gallons of diesel fuel left in the fuel tank outside the window to this room. (The fuel gauge reads "empty" but the last bit of fuel in the tank can be used if the generator is started up.) This is enough fuel to operate the generator at full power for a total of roughly 3 hours. The generator must be used at full power in order to operate the radio, but half power will suffice to run electrical appliances such as the refrigerator.

11) Back porch: The door on the porch has been smashed in from the outside.

There are five potted tropical plants standing around the perimeter of the porch (two in the right-hand corner, as viewed from the inside of the house). One of the pots (select at random) is inhabited by a poisonous green snake. An agent searching that particular pot will be bitten unless he rolls his Coordination or less.

Roof: The corrugated-metal roof of the missionary outpost sports a (now stationary) radar dish, a weather vane, an anemometer, two radio antennas, a rain gauge, a collection barrel for rain water (with pipes leading down and inside), and a grounded lightning rod.

The native villages

The two native villages are identical in configuration and appearance. In each, a small central campfire area is ringed by seven rectangular huts. The huts are supported on poles two feet off the ground (for protection from water at high tide). The floors are made of wood planks, the walls of woven fiber, and the roofs of insect-infested thatch.

If agents encounter a village in the daytime, the adult males and the outriggers will be gone on the daily fishing expedition. At sunset the adult males pull up the outriggers on the outer shore of the island. Fish nets and the day's catch are hung out to dry on poles at the (low tide) water's edge.

If agents enter a village peacefully, natives will offer them food and a place to stay. If a village is approached with hostility, a conch-horn alarm will be sounded, alerting residents of the other village and anyone else in the vicinity who is above the surface of the water. Within seconds, menfolk at sea or in the other village will stop what they're doing, grab weapons, and proceed to the source of the alarm. Each village has 15 fighting men, each one armed with either (determine randomly) a spear or a machete (treat as (10/52) hunting knife).

The horseshoe, general notes

The "hidden horseshoe" is a nuclear-powered floating drydock where the floating island from the *Doctor Yes* mission (see DRAGON issue #48) was constructed. There are no more such islands under construction. The efforts of the crew are presently directed toward making the "horseshoe" seaworthy in preparation for a scheduled journey to the waters around Antarctica.

From the air, the complex appears as a huge, battleship-gray, horseshoe-shaped structure. Normally, the top ten feet of the complex (the first deck) is above the surface of the lagoon. Six gun emplacements, five crane mechanisms, two periscopes, and four antennas can be seen around the perimeter of the top deck. (The overhead view of the top deck on page 39 — not the cross-section map

which appears on the following page — can be revealed to agents who obtain information from a successful aerial reconnaissance of the horseshoe.)

If personnel within the complex receive advance notice of an attempt at aerial reconnaissance (via radar), or if the horseshoe's security devices detect the presence of unfamiliar persons on or near the island, the horseshoe will submerge. The ballast tanks on the underside of the structure can take on enough water in five minutes to sink the horseshoe to the lagoon floor in five minutes. When it is submerged, there is only a 5% chance of the horseshoe being visible to aerial reconnaissance.

When the horseshoe is viewed during the day from several hundred feet away at ground level, other details of the top deck become visible. The periscopes and antennas which protrude from the top deck will be easily seen from ground level, although they might be overlooked or misidentified by aerial reconnaissance because of their small size. Agents will see anchor chains stretching down at an angle into the ocean. Various seams and fittings are discernible, both on the top surface and the par: of the first deck which is visible above the water. There is a 10% chance that a small number of people (1-6) will be visible atop the structure.

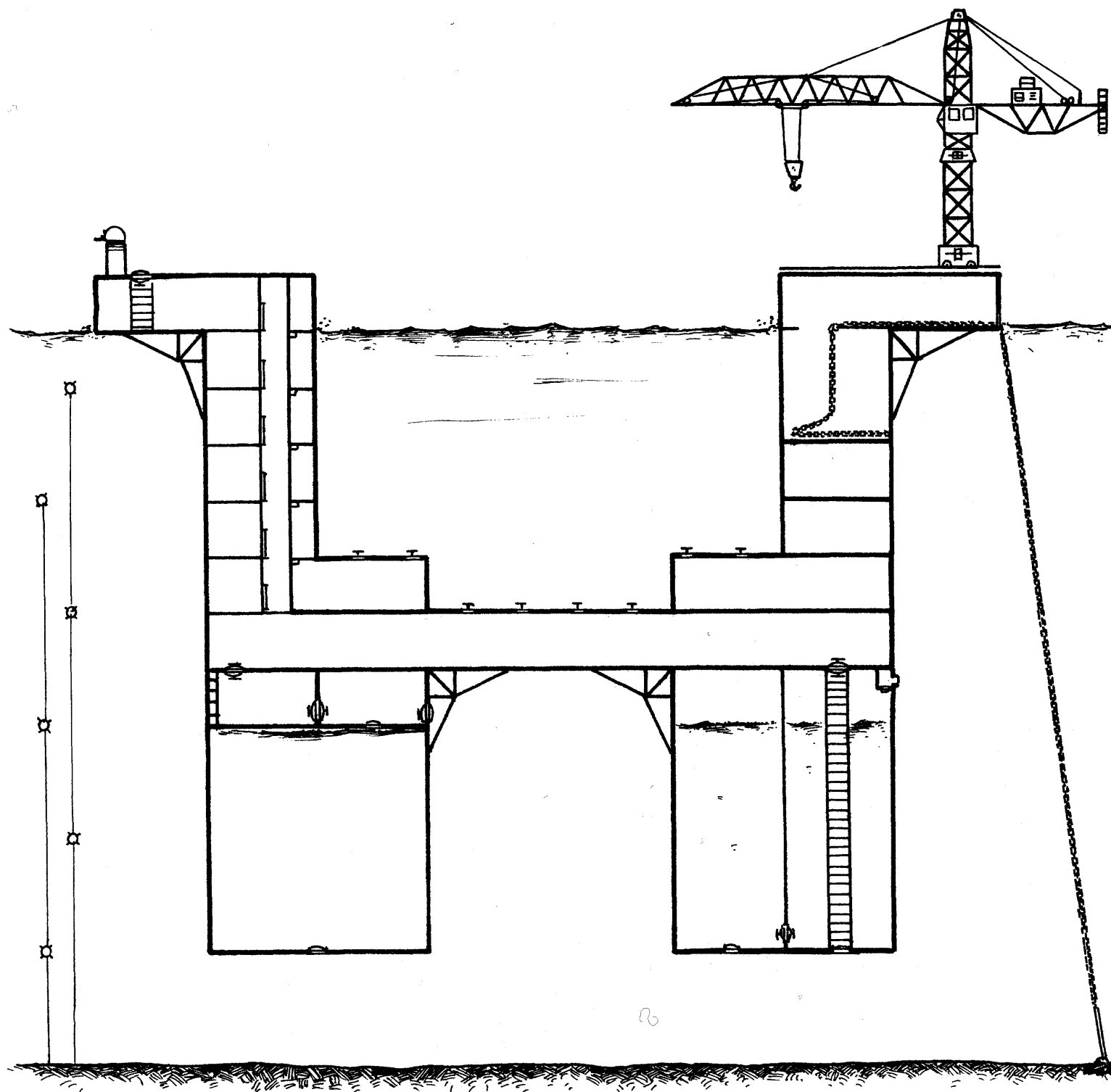
When seen from the same vantage point at night, the top of the horseshoe will be only a shadowy outline. None of the exterior details of the top deck mentioned above will be visible, except for the large cranes whose frames stand out against the night sky. The agents' view will be further obscured and inhibited by the illumination and glare from six rotating searchlights placed around the perimeter of the top deck.

When its systems and mechanisms are working properly, the horseshoe complex gives off a low, steady hum which is audible from any place on the eastern part of the island or the eastern half of the lagoon. Personnel inside the complex do not notice the sound unless their attention is drawn to it. This humming sound is what the natives refer to as the "many heartbeats" of the thing that rises from the lagoon.

Personnel

A day inside the horseshoe complex is divided into first shift (0000-0800 hrs), second shift (0800-1600 hrs), and third shift (1600-2400 hrs). Every employee's schedule calls for him or her to sleep during either first or second shift, with one shift at work and the other shift reserved for recreation.

All personnel within the complex will know that floating islands can be built on the floating drydock. All personnel (except the prisoners) will know where each chamber is in the complex and what it is



used for. However, only qualified personnel will be able to operate hardware and devices within each chamber. All personnel except the prisoners know how to escape the complex via the lower airlocks, but they are uneasy about swimming too far from the horseshoe because of the underwater minefield (see hardware descriptions below). Each employee of the complex will possess the equivalent of 1-100 dollars, and each worker wears a small, gold-plated trident with his or her name embossed on it.

Only the guards will know that Mad Merc is on a solitary visit to the northern village, and he intends to be away from the complex for at least the next 72 hours.

The horseshoe's security setup is simple but effective, and a bit tricky. If electronic or visual surveillance discloses trouble about to occur imminently, a general alarm will be sounded. At the first hint of actual trouble, Security Chief Baker will head to the security control room (if he isn't there already). He will

ascertain, via a wrist radio, as many details as he can from other observers. He will contact guards not in the control room and order them to close in on the source of trouble. The guards will keep in constant touch with the security chief. The rest of the crew, when an alarm is sounded, will head directly to their sleeping quarters. They are given five minutes to report to quarters, after which time they will be automatically locked into their chambers for at least 10 minutes. The missionaries being held prisoner

will also be locked in. No one will be able to leave his or her quarters without the permission of the security officers.

Security Chief Baker also has a way of learning about intrusions that may not pose an immediate threat. He is in charge of monitoring four walkie-talkies located around the island as further protection for Mad Merc. Two walkie-talkies were given to the natives, one for each village. The natives will promptly report any visitors or signs of visitors to Baker via their walkie-talkies (but without telling the visitors they are doing so). Mad Merc has another walkie-talkie, kept on his person at all times. The fourth unit is hidden inside the radio in the missionary outpost, and is constantly in operation. Agents may be able to locate and remove it from the radio, but if they do so and then destroy it, Chief Baker will instantly know that it has been tampered with. As long as it continues to operate, any conversation sent or received through the radio will be broadcast directly to Chief Baker.

Guards are dressed entirely in black—slacks, turtleneck sweater, and deck shoes. The sweaters each bear a small gold trident emblem over the heart. Each guard is armed with a .45 Thompson submachine gun, a 9mm (p-08) Luger self-load (f), 6 hand grenades clipped to his belt, and 5 sleep capsules in a pants pocket. Each guard wears a two-way wrist radio/watch. Also carried on the belt is a gas mask with a small canister containing a 2-minute supply of oxygen, and an extra clip of ammunition for the Luger.

Technicians, scientists and engineers inside the complex will be attired in white lab coats with slacks and shoes of their choosing. Each technician also has a dosimeter pinned to his or her coat, for determining the amount of radiation the wearer has been exposed to.

Maintenance workers are usually attired in gray coveralls. They carry no weapons. The remainder of the personnel wear casual clothing of their own choosing.

Hardware

Anti-personnel mines: Hundreds of these devices surround the horseshoe complex, planted on fish lines at various depths. The mines are set to prevent underwater access to the complex, not necessarily access across the surface of the lagoon. Even when the tide is at its lowest, there is a 10-foot depth of open water along the surface. This allows solitary swimmers, rafts, or a small boat with a shallow draft to approach the complex without contacting the mines.

Each mine is a 6-inch diameter hollow metal sphere covered with glass spikes. When a spike is brushed against and broken, sea water enters the ball and combines with the chemicals inside it,

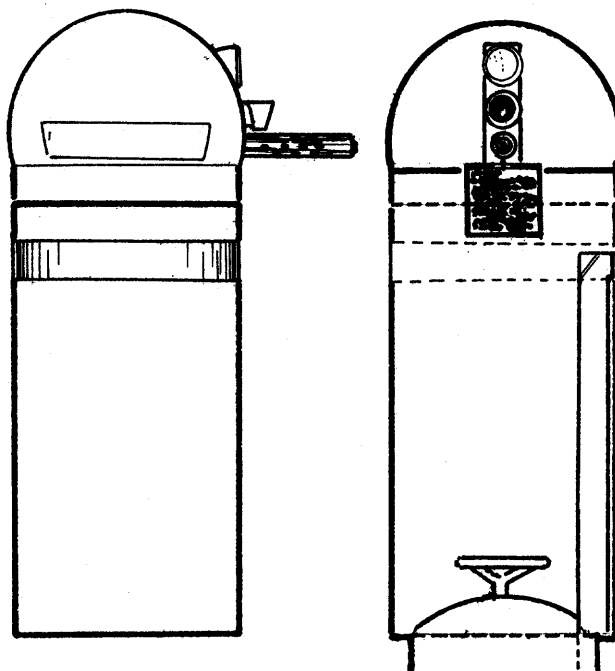
causing an explosion that does 1-10 points of damage to anyone within five feet.

Mines strung to the same line are always spaced about 40 feet apart, but the lines are staggered so that the entire three-dimensional undersea area around the complex is covered by the mine network. There is never more than 10 feet between one mine and the nearest adjacent one; thus, a swimmer going between the mines would always be within five feet of at least one of them. (This can be important if a swimmer becomes entangled in a line; see below).

The natural buoyancy of the hollow mines (about two-thirds of the interior volume is air) will keep the lines fairly taut and reaching toward the surface, even if only one unexploded mine is left on a line. There is only a 10% chance that the explosion of a mine will sever the line to which it and other mines are attached.

An agent with experience in undersea diving, or even one who is simply careful, will not have much of a problem avoiding the mines on a one-by-one basis. But even the most cautious swimmer stands a chance of getting entangled in one or more of the hundreds of lines. Anyone attempting to swim through the mine-field has a 30% chance of being entangled for every 20 feet traveled any time the swimmer is within 100 feet of the complex. At night, this chance rises to 50%. If a swimmer becomes entangled, he must roll his Coordination value or less to get free, with a roll of 95 or higher indicating that a mine (the nearest one, which is always within the five-foot damage range) has exploded. At night, the chance of becoming untangled decreases by 50% (must roll Coordination minus 50 or less).

Sonar equipment on the horseshoe



will detect the explosion of any mine at any distance from the complex, and appropriate security measures (see Personnel, above) will be implemented.

Mad Merc's wheelchair: This device outwardly resembles most motorized wheelchairs, except for the very thick back panel. It is self-powered (electric) and is steered by a joystick built into the left armrest. On the inside of the right armrest is a small square black button. Pressing on this button will activate the jet pack which is built into the back of the chair.

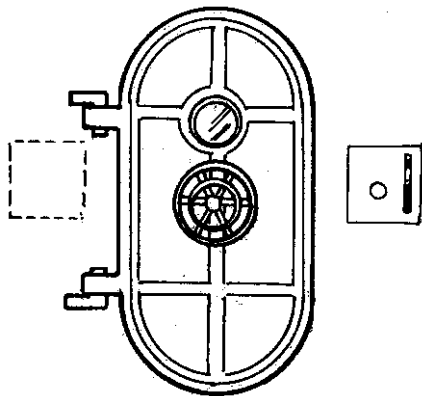
Mad Merc is always strapped into the chair, in effect "wearing" the back and armrests much as a camper straps on a backpack. When he activates the jet pack, Mad Merc (plus up to 100 pounds of extra weight he may be carrying) can "blast off" and travel up to 500 yards. Guidance of the jet pack is also accomplished with the joystick in the left armrest. Turning the square black button clockwise increases the thrust of the jet (for takeoffs and fast getaways), and turning it counter-clockwise decreases the thrust (for hovering or landing). The jet pack will keep its cargo airborne for a maximum of 60 seconds and can achieve a top speed of 30 mph.

Security outposts: The six protrusions around the perimeter of the top deck are 6 feet high and 3 feet in diameter. Each cylinder is topped by a hemisphere (see diagram) which contains a camera, a periscope, a heavy machine gun, and a searchlight. The hemisphere makes a complete rotation every minute.

A bulletproof glass window 6 inches wide allows manual operation of the periscope from inside the structure if the camera ceases to function. The rotation

of the hemisphere and the operation of the gun can be controlled from inside, or (as is usually the case) from a console in the Security Monitoring Room (Room E, first deck).

Because of the rotation of the six outposts, any area of the complex and the surrounding water is covered at all times by at least one camera and one gun emplacement. The heavy machine guns (PWV 95; PB 0; S-2; M-30; L-80; WS S; R 10) can be lowered from the horizontal plane to 45 degrees below horizontal, but cannot point downward at an angle extreme enough to fire on someone hiding right next to the same outpost.



Airlocks: To gain access to an airlock, it is necessary to go through a special hatchway (see drawing) which resembles those found on submarines. There is a wheel with spoke-like handles which must be spun several times to either open the hatch or seal it. Opening or closing a hatch takes 5 seconds. The airlock door has a small window of bullet-proof glass which allows a view of the interior.

On the right side of the exterior of each airlock is a control panel for that airlock (see drawing). Each panel contains a switch and a timer. When the switch is in the up position, water is pumped out of the airlock. When the switch is down, water is let into the airlock from a six-

inch-square grated opening in the center of the floor. The timer is for decompression purposes; it can be set for up to an hour, although it is only necessary (considering the maximum ocean depth in this area) to decompress for a minute and a half. The airlock can fill with water or be completely emptied in one minute.

The hatch to the outside opens outward, and is only left open when guards are outside. All airlocks may be locked shut from the security monitoring room. Curved lines on the deck maps indicate in which direction each hatch opens.

Sliding door: These doors will slide open automatically when approached, stay fully open for five seconds and then quickly shut again. If something solid stops them from closing (just like an elevator door can be kept open), the doors will bounce open away from the obstruction every five seconds.

There are sensors on the floor of each chamber (five feet away from the doorway) which detect footsteps approaching a door, and other in-floor sensors which detect any significant amount of water in the room. If the moisture sensors in a room are activated, the sliding doors leading to that room will lock shut and cannot be opened unless overridden by someone in the security monitoring room.

The sliding doors are one inch thick and cannot be deactivated unless a cutting torch is used to melt a hole in the adjacent wall to expose the wiring. Some of these doors are slightly curved. Arrows on the deck maps indicate in which direction a door slides to close.

Vertical passageways

Within the floating complex are four vertical passageways large enough (5 feet square) for a man to crawl through. On each deck where a passageway appears, there is a small access panel necessary for maintenance. Six screws hold each panel in place, but anyone with a Physical Strength of more than 100 can pry off or smash in a panel. Even when intact, these panels are far from sound-proof. Any noise which is made on or from within a passageway will resonate through the passage and may be audible to someone who is near one of the access panels at any place along that passageway.

Passageway #1: This is a ventilation duct which usually contains nothing but fresh, clean air. The walls are slick, riveted metal which echoes even the tiniest sound made from within. Due to a lack of handholds, anyone with a Coordination less than 100 has a 25% chance, for each 10-foot distance climbed up or down, of slipping and falling to the bottom of the passageway on the sixth deck.

Releasing a gas or lighting a fire in the duct will set off smoke detectors and

cause the duct to be sealed off for 30 minutes. Other narrower passages between decks serve to carry fresh air throughout the complex, but these ducts are all too small to move through. They are automatically sealed off from the main duct when the smoke detectors are activated. This security system cannot be overridden.

Passageway #2: This shaft is a cable passage lined with electrical conduit and color-coded wiring. Cutting even a single wire without an insulated tool is dangerous; there is a 75% chance of being shocked each time. A person who is shocked will suffer an automatic 1-10 points of damage; if the damage roll is 7 or greater, the shock causes the person to fall to the bottom (sixth deck) of the passageway. If the damage roll is 6 or less, the person takes that much damage plus an additional 1-5 points, but is able to keep from falling.

Attempting to cut cables or wires at random will possibly yield the desired result, although that result may not be immediately apparent to the person doing the cutting. For each wire or cable which is cut, roll percentile dice. On a roll of 01-75, there is no effect. (Note: An agent with AOK of at least 75 in Electrical Engineering will only experience "no effect" on a roll of 01-25.) On any higher result, roll again and consult the following table to determine the effect:

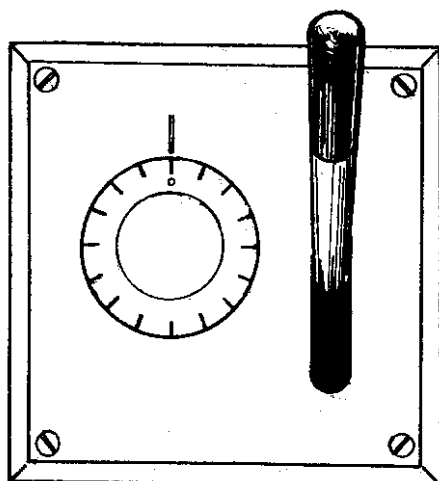
Roll	Electric power cut to:
01-30	Port top deck
31-55	Port first deck
56-75	Port second deck
76-90	Port third deck
91-95	Port fourth deck
96-00	Port fifth deck

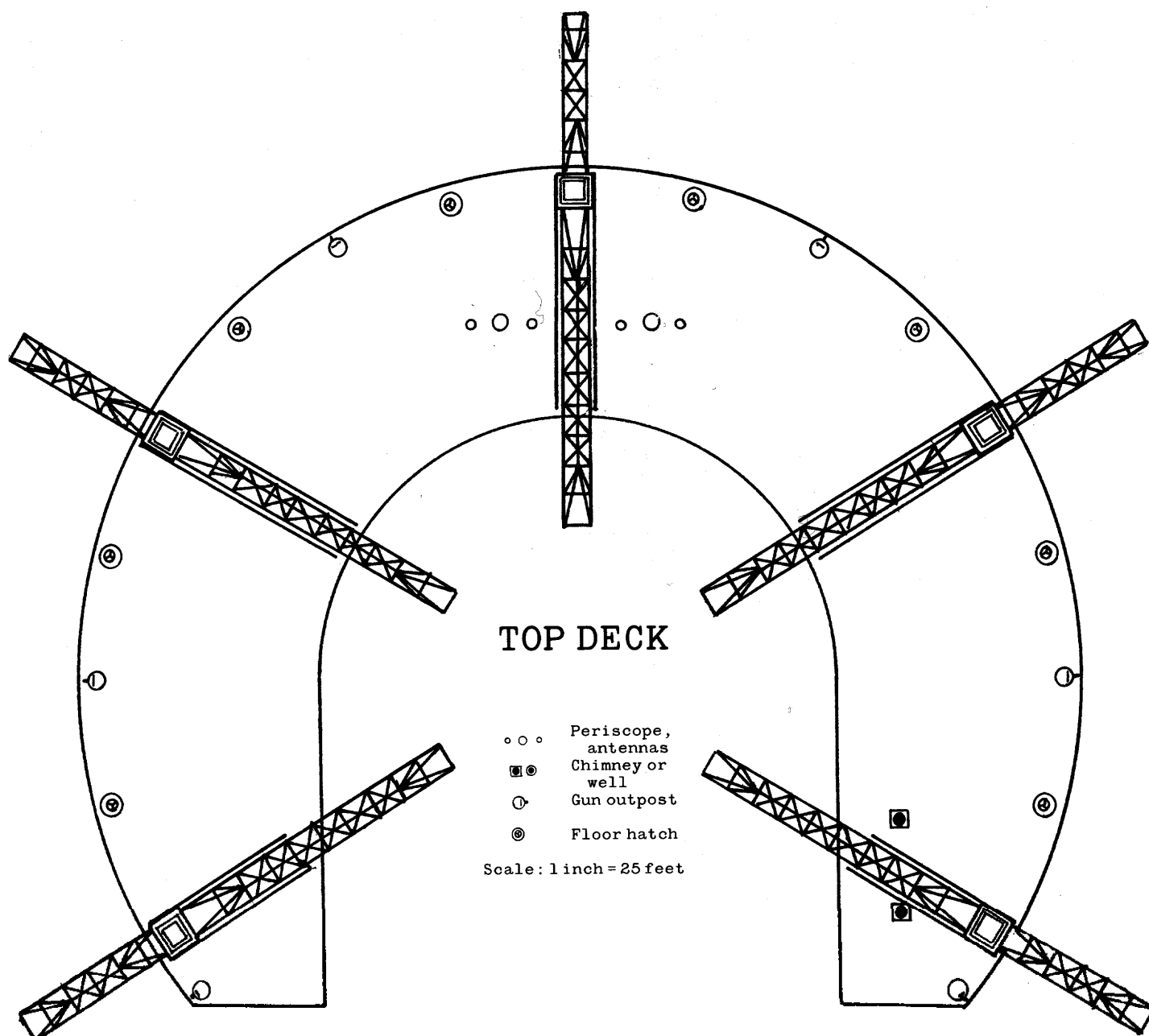
Duplication of effect on subsequent rolls is entirely possible.

The cables provide some handholds and footholds, but anyone with a Coordination less than 50 has a 25% chance of falling down the shaft every time they travel 10 feet up or down.

Passageway #3: This chimney-like crawlspace is lined with hot and cold water pipes. Cutting a hot-water pipe will cause 1 point of damage for each minute the water cascades down upon a person beside or below the cut pipe in the passageway, even if the person has fallen all the way to the sixth deck. The passageway will never fill up with leaking water, but the sides of the passage may become so slippery that only a person with a Coordination of more than 100 can climb up the pipes. Even when dry, the pipes are not easy to climb; anyone with a Coordination of less than 75 has a 25% chance of falling for each 10 feet traveled.

Passageway #4: This passageway is identical to #2, except that the wiring contained here is for the starboard side of the complex. Read "starboard" for "port" on the table to determine the effects of a cut wire.





DECK DESCRIPTIONS

Top Deck

Measuring 135 feet stem to stern and 165 feet wide at the beam, this horseshoe-shaped deck is primarily used for construction and doubles as a helipad. Five tower cranes, mounted on ballasted-base trolleys which run on rails, dominate the deck surface. The cranes will be located at the farthest outboard position possible on each set of rails. Originally, the jibs (horizontal booms) will be slewed (turned) as illustrated in the overhead view.

After watertight covers are removed from the electrical switch-boxes, the control cabin, diesel engine, and electric motor, an agent with a Construction Engineering AOK of more than 75 who is within the control cabin will be able to

raise or lower the hook on a crane and maneuver the crane back and forth on its trolley (as long as the ignition key for the crane's motor is in the lock).

If the watertight cover is removed from the slewing motor and enough room is available, the same agent will be able to rotate the crane. If the watertight cover is removed from the diesel engine which powers the trolley in the base, the same agent will be able to move the crane along the fixed track and stop it at any point. There are 15 gallons of fuel in the tank of each diesel engine, enough to operate the crane mechanism for 8 hours continuously.

Six periscope, camera, and gun-emplacement outposts ring the outer edge of the deck. The guns will only work above water. When the complex is to be

submerged, plastic bags can be fastened around the gun barrels in a matter of a minute or two to protect them from damage. The guns will operate when under water, but if one is fired (or the plastic-bag seal is otherwise broken) when it is submerged, the gun will fail to function; treat it as a jammed shell for combat purposes.

Scattered among the tower cranes and outposts along the outer edge of the deck are eight circular hatchways with no windows but a wheel lock on each side. All eight are hinged so that they open upward and out toward the deck edge. Ladders below them lead to the first deck.

Piercing the foredeck amidships are two periscopes, each flanked by a radar antenna and a radio antenna. Each of

these scopes will be extended 0-19 feet (roll d20, minus 1) up from the deck when first encountered.

Near the starboard aft are two valves. The forward valve covers the diesel furnace snorkel intake and is held shut by a small hydraulic piston. The aftward valve covers the diesel furnace snorkel exhaust and is also held shut by a piston. There is a 5% chance at any given hour that both valves will be open. An agent with a Physical Strength of more than 100, or someone using an explosive device, might be able to force a valve open. If the valves are open, there is a mild suction detectable around the intake hole, and the hot, choking exhaust of a diesel engine can be felt and smelled coming from the other hole.

First Deck

Pastel red walls

Stuffy, humid atmosphere

A: Hawsepipes (spurling tubes) — Separating the first deck into six sections are five 10-foot-wide hawsepipes containing anchor chain. Each hawsepipes can be entered by climbing the anchor chain or through a hatchway. There is enough room beside the anchor chain

for an average-sized person to squeeze through the chain opening into the chain locker below. There is no artificial light source here. An electric windlass operated from the bridge sits near the opening to the locker below. It can be hot-wired in five minutes by an agent with Electrical Engineering AOK of more than 75. The pulling of one anchor will not dislodge the other four, but will tilt the complex and possibly raise that one anchor.

B: Security Officer's Quarters — A bunk bed, wardrobe, desk with chair, and a short-wave radio base station furnish this chamber. The radio antenna pierces the wall and can communicate with the four walkie-talkies around the atoll on a preset channel. Security Chief Baker is nearly always in this room; though his official on-duty shift is third, he sleeps in this room during the day and rarely leaves even during first and second shifts.

C: Security Decks — Each of these four curved-wall chambers has three ladders leading from hatchways on the top deck. A sealed wooden box behind the ladder leading to each security outpost contains 1,000 rounds of .60 caliber

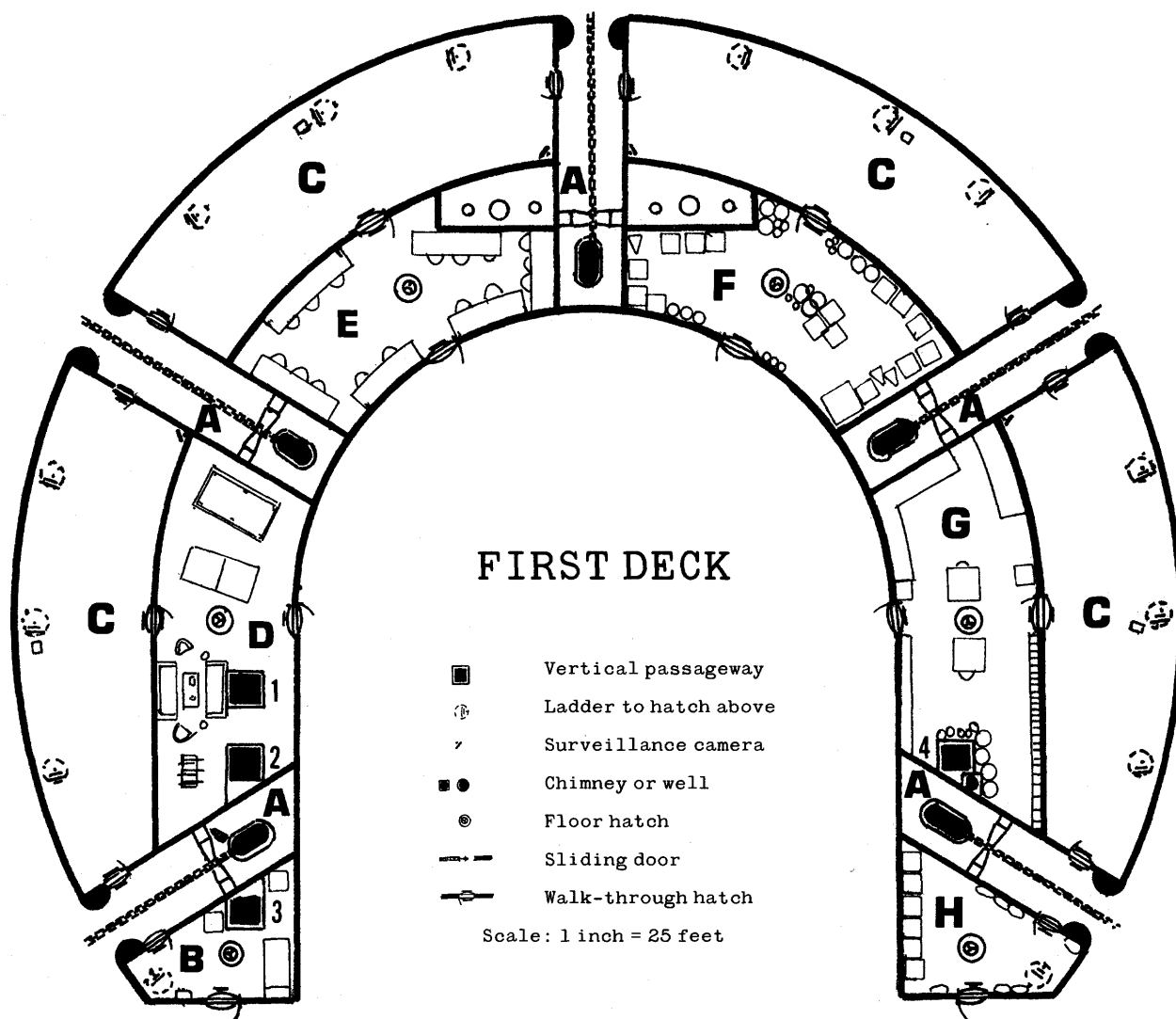
belted ammo for the heavy machine gun above. The security decks are differentiated by location: Amidships Port, Forward Port, Forward Starboard, and Amidships Starboard. Each chamber has a stationary surveillance camera.

D: Recreation Room — Brightly colored, comfortable stuffed chairs and long couches line the walls of this chamber. Tables for card playing, pool, foosball, table tennis, and drawing or writing are squeezed into all available areas in this space. There is a fully stocked bar (which looks like it gets a lot of use) against the port wall. The walls are decorated with worthless seascape paintings. A stereo is playing soft rock music.

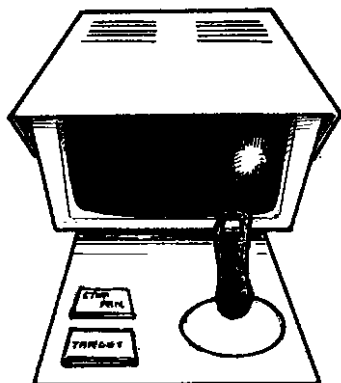
Personnel present, 3rd shift: Drysdale, Horse, Krumm, Nitt, Alexander, Drimmle, Fox, and Harold.

E: Security Monitoring Room — Six swivel chairs face a bank of 15 television screens. All controls are marked in English, and anyone with a Knowledge rating of 75 or more should be able to activate and operate any device in the room. A single, well-aimed bullet will destroy one particular device, screen, or control in the room.

Six of the monitoring screens show



the views from the cameras mounted on the outposts on the top deck. In front of each of these screens is a joystick and a pair of buttons (see drawing). The "Stop Pan" button locks a camera onto a viewed



target, stopping the rotation of the hemisphere atop the outpost. The camera's motion is now controlled by the joystick. Pressing the "Target" button magnifies the image on the screen and places a crosshair grid on the screen for more precise targeting with the joystick. If the thumb button atop the joystick is pressed, a stream of .60 caliber ammo will be fired from the machine gun at that outpost. The original 1,000 rounds of ammo at each gun is enough to operate it for about 1½ minutes.

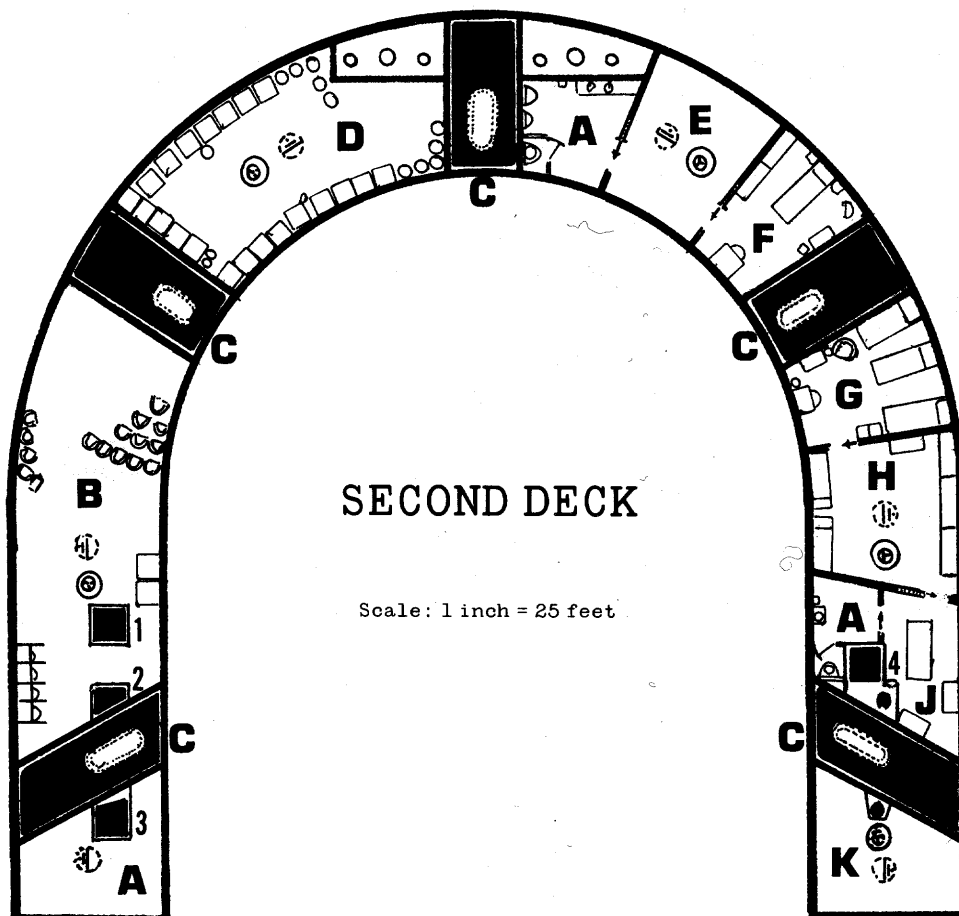
The other nine cameras show static views of various locations within the complex. One shows a view of the airlock on the fourth deck. Four others can view either the four security decks on this level, or can be patched in for surveillance of the nuclear reactor on the seventh deck. Three others are for the insides of airlocks, one on the sixth deck and two on the eighth deck. The last screen can be patched to either the Main or Auxiliary Bridge in order to view the radar and sonar screens which are located there.

The hatches to the Security Monitoring Room can be locked from the inside. All sliding doors in the complex can be locked, unlocked, opened or closed from here by throwing the proper switches.

Fastened to one wall of the room is a large, detailed map of the complex. It cannot be taken down or removed from the room, and the dark background color on which the map details are printed makes it impossible to trace large sections with any accuracy. The map may be studied or photographed by anyone in the room. Three gas masks and a fire extinguisher are hung near each of the two hatches. An intercom links this area to the Main and Auxiliary Bridges below.

Personnel present, 1st shift: Drysdale, Horse. 2nd shift: Krumm, Nitt. 3rd shift: Rine, Thompson.

F: Boatswain's Stores — Wire ropes, cable, rigging equipment, fiberglass rope, hemp rope, rubber hoses, metal



primer, enamel paint, light bulbs, small chain, a couple of inflatable rubber rafts, and other materials are located here.

Personnel present, 2nd shift: Foreman.

G: Maintenance Shop — The walls here are lined with tools and work benches. A large supply of various nuts, bolts, nails, cotter pins, shaft keys, C-clamps, and welding rods are sorted in bins along the starboard wall. Screwdrivers, wrenches, electric hand tools, extension cords, and a 200-pound welding machine fill the port wall. Dissected small engines and a myriad of engine parts are scattered on work benches along the forward wall. Against the aft wall is an air compressor with 900 feet of rubber hose for it coiled nearby. The welding machine will only fit through the external hatchway; any other equipment which is portable can be moved out the interior hatchway.

Personnel present, 1st shift: Horton. 3rd shift: Martinique.

H: Dry Foods Storage — Large sacks and cardboard boxes line the walls of this cubicle. The containers are filled with cereal products, sugar, flour, beans, coffee, potatoes, dried milk, and salt.

Second Deck

Pastel violet walls

Warm atmosphere

A: Head — In naval jargon, a head is a toilet. There are two small toilet areas on

this deck on either side of the horseshoe, and a larger room in the forward amidships section. The smaller rooms each contain two toilets, a mirror, sinks, and a paper towel dispenser. The larger room has two showers, one toilet facility, electric outlets for razors and hair dryers, cloth towels, soap, and a bin for soiled laundry.

Personnel present, 1st shift: Broom. 3rd shift: Broom.

B: Entertainment Center — Half of this area has been converted into a small movie theater. There is a blank white wall, chairs, and a projector. Six general-interest, English-language films are on a shelf near the projector.

The other half of the area contains a popcorn popper, unpopped kernels, seasoning, a vending machine (no coins necessary) for soda, and four study carrels. In the carrels are a manual typewriter, an electric typewriter, and two computer consoles which are only used for game-playing. Each computer console is equipped with a stack of six game cartridges.

Personnel present, 1st shift: Atwood. 2nd shift: Rine, Thompson, Jones, Hurt. 3rd shift: Detmer, Begg, Short.

C: Chain Lockers — Each of these chain lockers is 20 feet deep, unlit, and partially filled with anchor chain. The smell of rat droppings pervades these

areas. The floor in these areas is 20 feet below the first deck. Anyone who is wounded or not carrying a light source and drops to the floor of a chain locker will be bit by 1-6 rats for 1-6 points of damage per bite. A cable clench in the exterior bulkhead is where the end of the anchor chain is securely attached.

D: General Stores — A vast collection of everyday objects and household items can be found here. Office supplies, eating utensils, cooking utensils, motor oil, slippery hydraulic fluid, bolts of cloth, and color-coded electrical wire are stored in cardboard boxes along the walls.

E: Passageway — Usually a solitary armed guard is stationed here, and will be sitting in a chair reading a book. A key to the V.I.P. Quarters hangs beside the door.

Personnel present, 1st shift: Wicks. 2nd shift: Zyme.

F: V.I.P. Quarters — The sliding door to this chamber is electronically locked from the bridge. Inside the room is a single bed, a wardrobe, a writing desk, a chair, books of general interest, and writing materials.

Father Tuck is being held prisoner in this room. Occasionally an armed guard will escort him to the head on the other side of the passageway. If Father Tuck is rescued, he will not use a weapon.

Personnel present, all shifts: Father Tuck.

G: Sick Bay — Three single hospital beds and three clothes lockers, plus a desk and chair, are in this room. Father Tuck's assistants, Brother Robin and Brother John, are being held here behind the electronically locked door. If rescued, they will not use weapons.

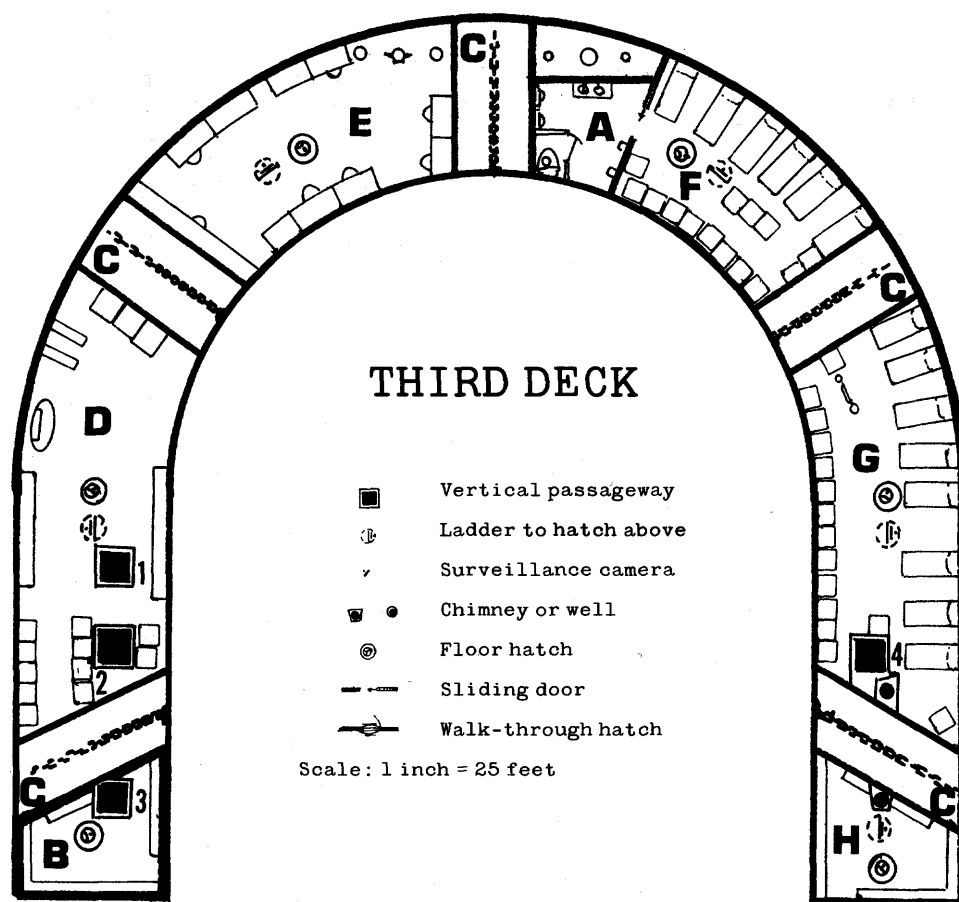
Personnel present, all shifts: Brother Robin, Brother John. 3rd shift only: Doc.

H: Triage — Injured or ill personnel come here to be diagnosed and treated. Counters and shelves along the starboard wall are filled with first-aid supplies, examining equipment, and medicines. A guard is located here, keeping an eye and ear out for the prisoners in the Sick Bay.

Personnel present, 2nd shift: Wicks. 3rd shift: Zyme.

J: Operating Room — In the center of this clean room, below a set of operating lamps, is an operating table. Crowded into the rest of the floor space are an anesthetic set-up, trays and cabinets containing surgical tools, a respirator, a locked (-/30) cabinet containing narcotics, and sterile packaged dressings and wrappings.

Personnel present, 2nd shift: Doc. 3rd shift: Hurt.



K: Cold Storage — This is a frost-coated freezer compartment full of hanging sides of beef, sausages, cheeses, poultry, vegetables, fruit, and ice. The room has a thermostat control above the light switch which is currently set at 0° F., but can be altered from -5° F. to normal room temperature.

Third Deck

Pastel orange walls

Dry atmosphere

A: Head — Same particulars as for the corresponding area on the second deck.

B: Small Arms Arsenal — Lining the double-thickness walls of this chamber are six 9mm P-08 Luger self-load pistols and four .45 Thompson submachine guns. Beside each weapon is a box of 100 rounds of suitable standard ammunition. Eight-cartridge magazines for the Lugers are plentiful, and the four Thompson magazines will hold 20 cartridges each.

C: Chain Lockers — These are the same areas described under paragraph "C" for the second deck. The chambers are, as noted above, 20 feet in depth, so the areas represented on the map of the third deck are vertical extensions of the areas mapped on the second deck, with no floor surface between the decks in these locations.

D: Laundry Area — Among stacks of clean and soiled security-guard uniforms is an industrial washing machine and clothes dryer. White lab coats and casual men's and women's clothing are waiting to be pressed in the mangle. Two electric irons, two ironing boards, and a sewing machine are also in the room. Six pairs of various-sized combat boots wait beside a shoeshine kit. Along the forward wall are stacks of dry, folded towels, gray mechanics's coveralls, and men's shorts.

Personnel present, 2nd shift: Vallier.

E: Auxiliary Bridge — Lining the walls of this chamber are seven consoles with matching chairs. The consoles are for radar, the diving control center, the quartermaster post, radio, sonar, SINS (Submarine Inertial Navigation Systems), and the complex's computer. A periscope flanked by a radio antenna and a radar antenna stands in one corner of the room. All controls on the auxiliary bridge can be overridden by the main bridge controls unless the main bridge controls have already been disabled.

An agent with AOK of 85 or higher in Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, Transportation Engineering, or Military Science should be able to operate any console (one unit at a time). By pressing a control at the quartermaster's post, the room can be bathed in red light. The quartermaster actually pilots the

complex; the Diving Control Center Officer is in charge of submerging and raising the craft. An intercom links the auxiliary bridge to the main bridge, the monitoring room on the first deck, and the reactor control room below.

F: Female Day Crew Quarters — Six sets of bunk beds line the outer wall of this chamber. The inner wall is lined with 12 padlocked (-/25) lockers full of women's clothing, personal belongings, and (1-100) dollars each. A bookshelf along the back wall is filled, predominantly with gothic romance novels. A video tape player and television beside the bookshelf are stacked high with video tape cassettes.

Personnel present, 1st shift: Thompson, Schwatzkopf, Ekler, Smith, Hansen, Watson, Straum, Judge, Marconi, Stew, Doc, and Foreman.

G: Male Day Crew Quarters — Eight sets of bunk beds line the outer walls of this chamber. The inner wall is lined with 16 padlocked (-/25) lockers each containing men's clothing, personal effects, and (1-100) dollars. A stereo with two speakers stands against one wall, which also has shelves stacked high with various rock music albums.

Personnel present, 1st shift: Krumm, Nitt, Rine, Zyme, Tanaka, Hydrason, Jones, Berkeley, Alexander, Dolphin,

Flood, Koenig, Soup, Hurt, Begg, and Short.

H: Food Stores — Six levels of shelves cover the walls of this room, each stacked with hundreds of canned goods. Every sort of food, from apricots to zucchini, can be found here — but there isn't a can opener in the room.

Personnel present, 2nd shift: Soup. 3rd shift: Stew.

Fourth Deck

Pastel blue walls
Chilly atmosphere

A: Head — Same particulars as for corresponding areas on the second deck.

B: Male Night Crew Quarters — Eight sets of bunk beds with blankets line the outer wall of this cluttered chamber. Along the inside wall are 16 padlocked (-/25) lockers containing men's clothing, personal belongings, and (1-100) dollars each. The floor is carpeted in blue shag. A dart board with six darts hangs on the aftward wall.

Personnel present, 1st shift: 'Box, Elton, Vallier. 2nd shift: Horse, Fox, Harold, Horton, Tsuji, and DeForest. 3rd shift: Wicks.

C: Female Night Crew Quarters — Six sets of bunk beds are positioned along the outer wall of this well-kept room. On

the opposite wall are 12 padlocked (-/25) lockers containing women's clothing, personal objects, and (1-160) dollars apiece. The floor is carpeted in light blue shag. There are two clotheslines strung across the room with undergarments and sweaters draped across them to dry.

Personnel present, 2nd shift: Drysdale, Drimble, Martinique, DuBois, Atwood, Detmer, Guild, Bat, Kingston, George, Broom, and Lange.

D: Main Bridge — The main bridge is furnished with consoles and chairs identical in function but not in location to those on the auxiliary bridge. As long as these consoles are operating, the controls in the auxiliary bridge can be overridden from here.

An intercom links the main bridge to the auxiliary bridge, the security monitoring post, and the reactor control room below.

A portable tape recorder is sitting atop the radio in the main bridge. It contains an audio cassette with a recorded message. In order for the message to be replayed, the tape must be rewound. The message is as follows:

*"Gigantic Gun calling Mad Merc
... Gigantic Gun to Mad Merc ..."*

"We read you ..."

"Is Stubby around?"

"Um ... no, he's at the village."

*"Well, tell him that Pong called,
and the Administrator got his sticky
little fingers on the 'Horseshoe'
blueprints. Got it?"*

"Yeah, got it."

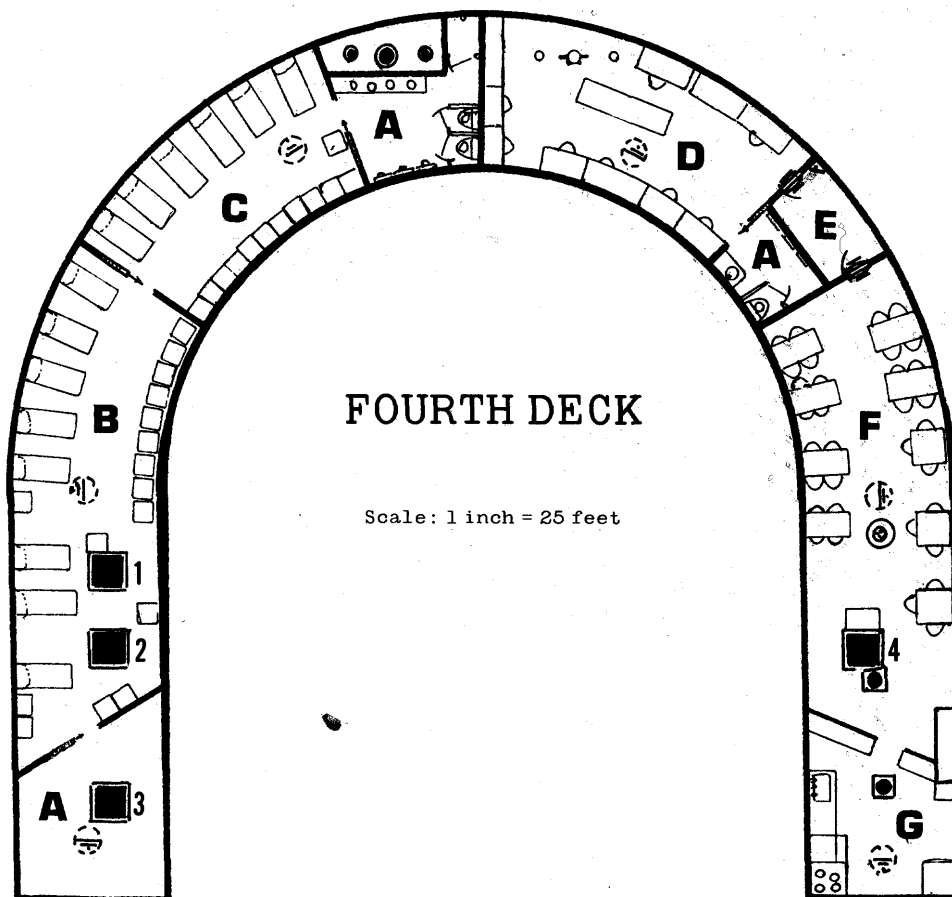
"Over and out."

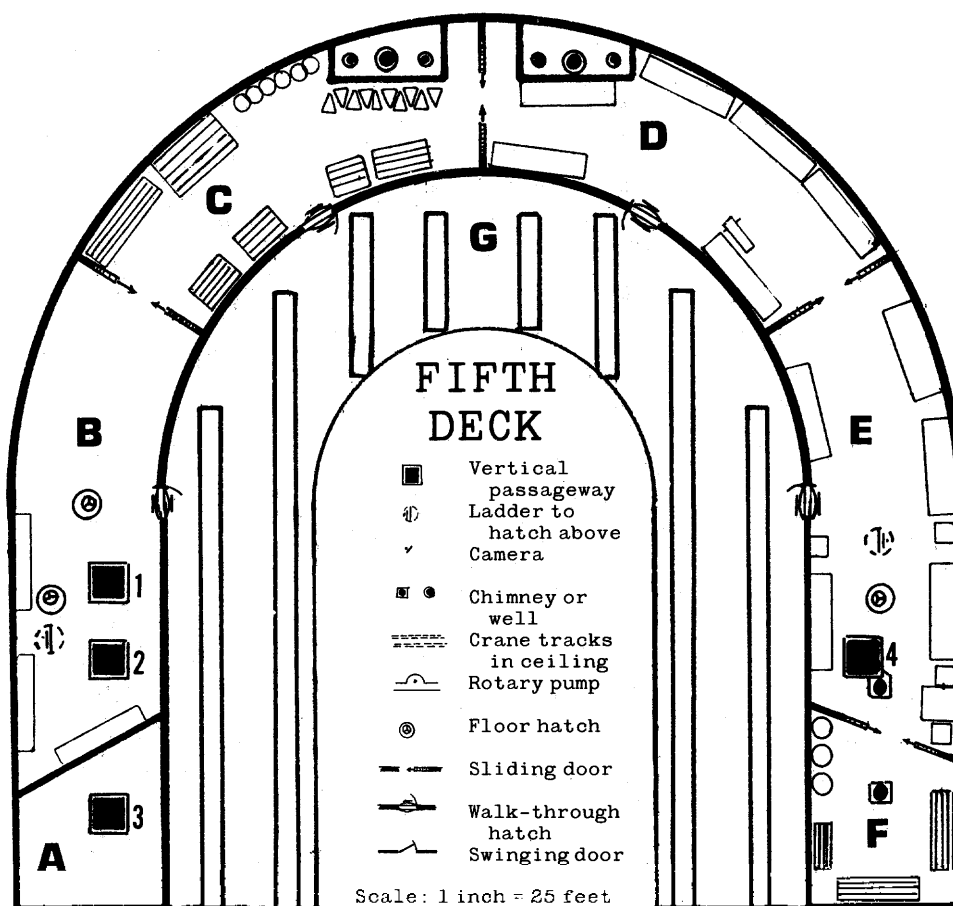
Personnel present, 1st shift: Guild, Bat, DeForest, Kingston, and George. 2nd shift: Judge, Dolphin, Marconi, Flood, and Koenig. 3rd shift: Baker (if not in security room).

E: Airlock — This small, empty chamber is used as a safety zone for those on the main bridge. The hatches at each end of the room are waterproof, and the one leading to the main bridge can be locked from the bridge side. A sign by each hatch, printed in English and German, reads: "Only one hatch should be open at a time. Seal both hatches during Condition Red." A security camera is posted here and is linked to the security monitoring station on the first deck.

F: Mess Deck — Nine tables, with 3-4 chairs each, line the walls of this curved room. Trays of food can be picked up at the counters separating the mess deck from the galley. A tray return conveyor and dishwasher runs along the starboard wall connecting the mess deck and the galley. When the dishwasher is operating, the water inside heats to 150° F. and would inflict 1-10 points of damage to anyone coming into contact with it.

Personnel present, 1st shift: Martin-





ique, DuBois, Detmer. 2nd shift: Begg. 3rd shift: Schwartzkopf, Ekler, Tanaka, Smith, Hydrason, Hansen, Watson, Berkeley, Straum, Tsuji, Horton, Atwood, Guild, Judge, Bat, Dolphin, DeForest, Marconi, Kingston, Flood, George, and Koenig.

G: Galley— Hanging around the hood of the cooking stove are six large pots and a colander. The walls are lined with refrigerators, food preparation equipment, and storage shelves filled with clean dishes and silverware. Knives are everywhere, and there is usually always water boiling on the stove for one purpose or another. A large baking oven fills the remaining space in this cramped chamber. Thirty meals can be prepared and served at one time from this galley.

Personnel present, 2nd shift: Stew. 3rd shift: Soup, Foreman.

Fifth Deck

Pastel green walls

Odor of wood shavings in the air

A: Fresh Water Reservoir — Approximately 2,000 gallons of fresh drinking water is stored in this metal-walled tank. If the tank is emptied, the carpentry shop would be inundated with 1 foot of water.

B: Carpentry Shop — Two lathes, a band saw, and a rotary saw are the largest tools in this room. Power hand tools

include a pneumatic nail driver with a clip of 30 nails, a router, a 3/8" drill, and a power saw. Other tools include rip saws, crosscut saws, hammers, a hatchet, an axe, an adz, and a crowbar. A pair of sawhorses and a push broom complete the scene.

Personnel present, 1st shift: Lange.

C: Wood Storage — Huge wooden keel blocks and disassembled parts of bilge cradles are stored here. There are stacks of fresh, uncut lumber along the outer walls, along with six sealed nail kegs. The kegs are plainly marked and contain nails ranging in size from 8-penny to railroad spikes. Each keg weighs between 75 and 100 pounds and will shatter if it is thrown.

Personnel present, 3rd shift: Lange.

D: Metal Storage — Bins for the storage of raw metal are lined up along most of the wall space in this room. The metals range from brittle wrought iron to carbon-hardened plate. Finely tooled steel in a variety of lengths and dimensions, used for repair work, is stored here. There are also large steel plates, weighing 250 pounds apiece (used for hull repairs) stacked here, along with coil springs of varying sizes and long, thin metal bars.

Strewn around the chamber, mostly in the area of the door leading to the metal shop, are the parts of a makeshift set of

barbells and accessories. The set of barbells weighs 150 pounds.

Personnel present, 1st shift: Drimmle. 2nd shift: Alexander, Elton. 3rd shift: Box.

E: Metal Shop — Three 200-pound welding machines stand near the center of this room. The walls are lined with large machine tools including metal lathes, brake presses, drills, and punches. Small hand tools on work tables and hanging on wall pegs include ball peen hammers, grinders, pliers, wrenches (adjustable spanners), hand drills, and calipers.

Two acetylene torches, each with two 100-pound fuel tanks on wheeled carts, are ready for use. Both the oxygen and the gas must be turned on for a torch to be ignited. Welding machines and torches are too large to fit through hatches in the ceiling or floor, but will pass easily through the wide external hatch.

Also in the room are six 30-gallon barrels, each plainly and truthfully marked in English according to its contents. They contain lubricating fluid, hydraulic oil, cutting oil, cleaning solvent, motor oil, and sawdust.

Personnel present, 1st shift: Fox, Harold. 2nd shift: Schwartzkopf, Ekler, Box. 3rd shift: Elton.

F: Plumbing Supply Room — Leaning against the walls of this room are (1-10) foot lengths of plastic pipe, aluminum conduit, and ducting material. Boxes of metal screws, pipe elbows, T-fittings, caps, and other plumbing fixtures are stacked against the aft wall. A circular snorkel exhaust shaft runs from the ceiling to the floor of this room.

G: Upper Construction Deck — This exterior construction deck is flat and empty, except for four long metal rails and four shorter ones used to support floating islands during construction. Each rusty railing is 1 meter tall and runs toward the open edge of the horseshoe.

Sixth Deck

Pastel yellow walls

Damp atmosphere

A: Water Treatment Facility — Dominating the floor space in this room is a flash distillation plant for desalinization of sea water. An agent with AOK of more than 75 in Hydraulic Engineering will quickly recognize the device and be able to deactivate it within (1-10) minutes. Water temperatures within the facility range from 10° C. to over 100° C., and the water quality ranges from salt-saturated to pure. Fresh water is pumped up to the fresh water reservoir on the deck above, and from there it is piped between the walls and floors to where it is needed.

Besides the assorted pipes, pumps, and intakes surrounding the distiller,

there are three large, sealed tanks. An agent with AOK of more than 75 in Hydraulic Engineering will recognize the tanks as part of a closed-system sewage treatment facility. Opening any valves or puncturing any of the tanks will release copious amounts of odorous, adhesive raw sewage.

Personnel present, 2nd shift: Straum.

B: Atmosphere Recycling Plant — Four large cylindrical air tanks, a carbon dioxide eliminator, and a noisy, electrically driven air compressor are crowded into this bleak chamber. An agent with AOK of more than 75 in Chemistry or Mechanical Engineering will be able to recognize and operate this equipment.

The ventilation system which runs throughout the complex contains gas sensors which automatically seal off any area containing a strange gas, smoke, or fumes. The system cannot be overridden, but will reset itself and unseal the locked-up area after 30 minutes unless the danger is still present.

Personnel present, 2nd shift: Berkeley.

C: Reactor Control Room: — Contained within the reactor deck, inside a five-foot thickness of reinforced concrete and lead, is the reactor control room. The hatches to the control room can be locked from the inside and cannot be deactivated without cutting through the inch-thick plate metal hatch.

Three foot-thick, bulletproof windows overlook the reactor area from here. Beside the windows are television monitors which allow the operators to see all corners and floor space in the reactor area. Ceiling-to-floor control panels line the walls of the control room. An agent with AOK of more than 100 in Physics would be able to control the speed of reaction and the reactor's power output. An agent with AOK of more than 75 in Construction Engineering or Industrial Engineering would be able to operate the remote controls for the cranes from here, but would need someone to connect and disconnect the hoist hooks.

A public-address system in here allows controllers to speak with anyone on the reactor deck, and an intercom connects the reactor control room to the main and auxiliary bridges. Any part of the reactor system can be started, operated, and stopped from this control room.

Personnel present, 1st shift: Tsuji. 2nd shift: Hydrason, Watson. 3rd shift: Jones, DuBois.

D: Nuclear Reactor — Raising its bulbous, white enamel head through the center area of the metal grating on this section of the sixth deck is the complex's nuclear reactor. The casing is extremely strong; it would take the equivalent of 120 ounces of plastique to penetrate its plating.

There is an oblong white enamel protrusion up through the grating on the port side. This is the reactor's heat exchanger. Running along the mesh surface on this part of the deck are three sets of crane tracks, each containing a hoist. The largest of the three hoists can lift 10 tons, the other two can lift 2 tons each.

E: Radioactive Materials Vault — This chamber contains 50 stainless-steel cylinders adorned with radioactive warning labels. Some of them have unused core material, others contain radioactive waste. The cylinders all weigh the same (25 kilograms each when full, 5 kilograms when empty), and their contents are treated the same for purposes of determining damage from radiation poisoning. For each minute that a person is exposed to the contents of a cylinder (only possible if one is opened or broken), that person will take 1 point of damage per day for the rest of his or her life. A pair of large double doors leading into this room will swing open easily at the push of a hand.

F: Airlock — This airlock has an interior hatch, a flood control switch, and a decompression timer. Decompression at these depths takes 1 minute. There is a drain in the center of the floor and eight lockers along the long walls, each locked

(-/30) and containing a wet suit with flippers, scuba gear, and a spear gun. The air tanks contain one hour's worth of air, less if the user dives deeper than the depth at which the airlock is located. A solitary camera monitors the airlock and is linked to the security monitoring station on the first deck. The external hatch opens outward, but only when the airlock is completely flooded. The external hatch cannot be opened from the outside.

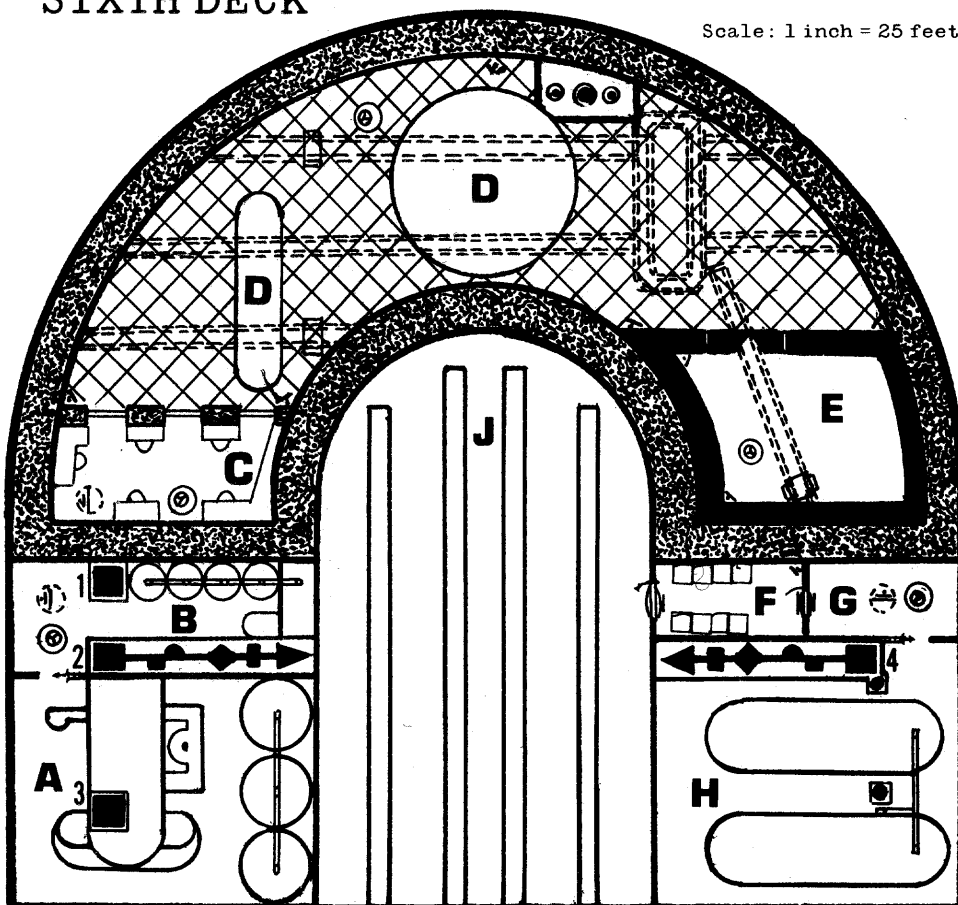
G: Passageway — There is nothing noteworthy about this area except for the features indicated on the deck map.

H: Fuel Room — Two huge white enamel cylindrical tanks dominate this chamber. Piping leads out of them down through the deck flooring. An agent with AOK of more than 75 in Chemistry or Transportation Engineering will be able to identify the smell of diesel fuel in the room. If one of the tanks is penetrated by 20 ounces of plastique or the equivalent, the resultant explosion will destroy everything within 300 feet of the tank except the sixth and seventh reactor decks. Persons within 301-600 feet of the explosion will take 1-10 points of damage. The tanks are bulletproof.

J: Lower Construction Deck — Much like the upper construction deck above, this area is also flat and empty except for

SIXTH DECK

Scale: 1 inch = 25 feet



four rusty support rails each one meter tall.

Seventh Deck

White enamel walls

Clean, dry atmosphere

A: Head — This washroom contains a shower, two toilet stalls, two wash basins, and other minor fixtures.

B: Engine Room — Three steam turbines in this room are used to propel the craft and to generate electricity. The chamber also contains auxiliary heat engines (diesel furnaces) which are used for heating when the nuclear reactor is shut down. Used steam is sent through the condenser and then pumped as cold water back through to the heat engines or the heat exchanger on the reactor. Electricity generated by the spinning turbines is stored in batteries located between the turbines.

The turbines, the diesel furnace, and the condenser are all connected by 2-foot-diameter pipes reinforced with a layer of steel cable and fiberglass. If a pipeline is pierced by 20 ounces of plastique or the equivalent, superheated steam will burst forth under great pressure, instantly cooking anyone within 10 feet of the puncture. Anyone between 10-20 feet away will receive 1-10 points of damage. The steam will continue to escape for up to five minutes, and will not stop at all if the nuclear reactor or the heat engines are operating.

There are no controls in the engine room. All operation of this equipment is controlled from the bridge. An agent with AOK of more than 75 in any sort of Construction, Hydraulic, Industrial, or Transportation Engineering will be able to recognize and explain the use of the objects in this room.

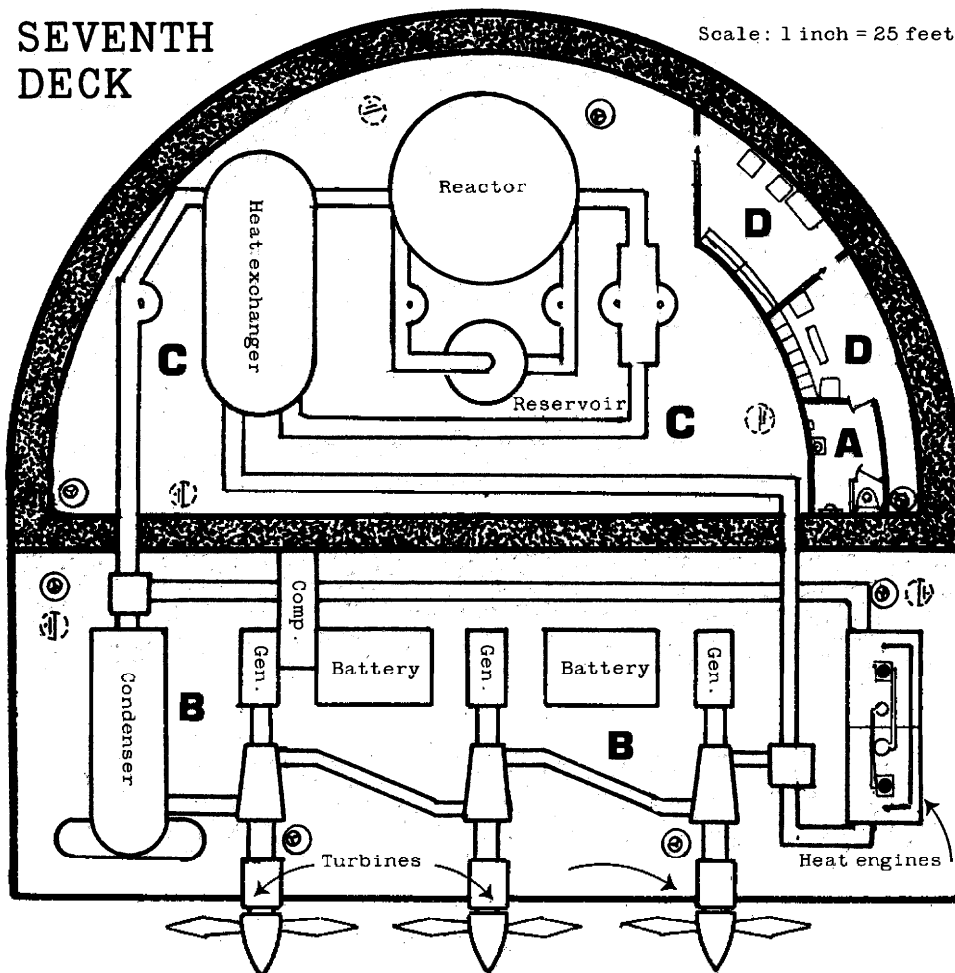
An agent with an AOK of more than 75 in Mechanical Engineering will be able to identify and deactivate the air compressor located in this room. This action will cause the complex to begin to sink within 1-10 minutes. Destroying the condenser will release hot, salty water from the flash distillation plant on the deck above.

Personnel present, 2nd shift: Tanaka, Smith, Short.

C: Lower Reactor Deck — Surrounded by five-foot-thick reinforced concrete lined with lead are the heat exchanger, nuclear reactor, coolant pumps, and heavy water reservoir which make up the nuclear power system. All four devices are connected by two-foot-diameter reinforced pipe. Piercing a pipe or a pump with 20 ounces of plastique or the equivalent will cause effects like those described in the engine room. These pipes carry superheated heavy water, which is not radioactive and looks, smells and tastes the same as natural water.

SEVENTH DECK

Scale: 1 inch = 25 feet



If the reactor itself is pierced with 120 ounces of plastique or the equivalent, the superheated-steam effect takes place as well as a radiation leak. Anyone on the sixth or seventh reactor decks and not protected by shielding when the reactor is punctured will take an immediate 1-10 points of radiation damage, plus 1-10 points per day for the rest of his or her life. Radiation may spread to other parts of the complex if the reactor deck is unsealed or hatches are opened after the reactor wall has been breached.

Piercing the heat exchanger (requiring 60 ounces of plastique or the equivalent) will cause the superheated-steam effect as above, but with twice the range. Anyone within 20 feet is killed, and those between 21-40 feet will take 1-10 points of damage.

An agent with AOK of more than 100 in Construction, Hydraulic, Industrial, or Transportation Engineering or Physics will recognize the apparatus on this deck as a pressurized boiling water reactor with a heavy water moderator and an enriched uranium oxide fuel core. There are no controls on this deck. All operations are controlled from the reactor control room on the sixth deck.

Personnel present, 2nd shift: Hansen.

D: Reactor Workers' Laundry — An industrial-size electric washer and dryer

plus other laundry accessories are in the forward section of this two-part chamber. The aft section has eight locked (-/30) equipment lockers, each with white radiation protection suits, hoods, breathing apparatus, boot coverings, and dosimeters within. The suits, properly worn, will protect a person from radiation indefinitely, but there is only enough air in each tank for 30 minutes of work. The breathing apparatus may be used like scuba gear. The suits will not protect the wearers from the effects of superheated steam.

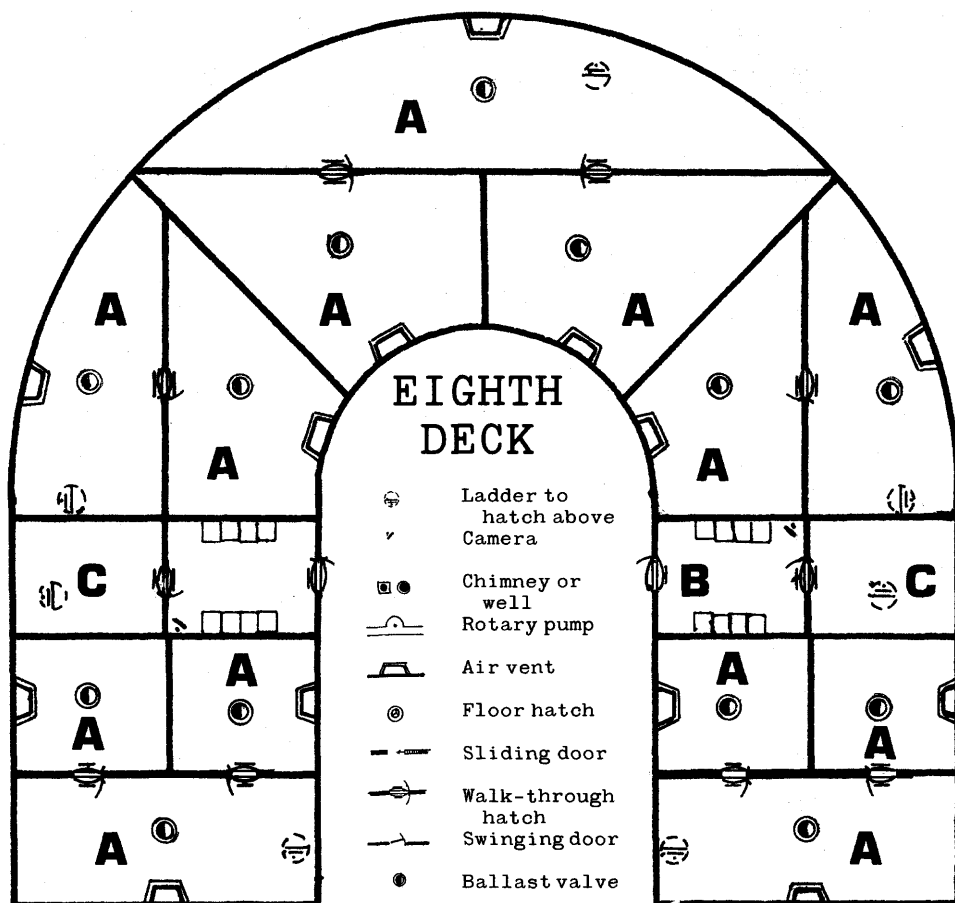
Personnel present, 3rd shift: Vallier.

Eighth Deck

Unlit, gray metal walls

Humid, salty air

A: Ballast Tanks — Chambers on this deck are 50 feet from floor to ceiling. All ladders reach up and down for the entire 50 feet, and each chamber has at least one wall with a hatch connecting it to an adjacent chamber. These hatches are located five feet from the bottom of the chambers. In the floor of each ballast chamber is a hydraulically controlled Kingston valve to let water in. The valve holes are six inches in diameter, and a physical strength of 300 is needed to force a valve open or closed. Against an exterior bulkhead near the top of each tank is a main vent which retains air



Scale: 1 inch = 25 feet

under slight pressure within the ballast tank and regulates the depth of water in the tank.

Controls for the ballast tanks are found on the bridge. The number of decks above the waterline is dependent on the depth of water in the ballast tank. When the complex is submerged (zero decks above the waterline), the water in the ballast tank is 49 feet deep. For each seven feet the depth decreases, one deck will rise above the waterline, so that when the ballast tank is emptied, seven decks (all but the ballast chamber itself) will be above water.

When play begins, the depth in the ballast tank is 42 feet (first deck is above water). When the water depth is changed, the anchor chains must be let out simultaneously, or structural damage may occur. This process is controlled from the bridge.

B: Airlocks— These two compartments are each identical to the airlock on the sixth deck, except that they have slightly more floor space.

C: Passageways— These areas are not part of the ballast tank system. They are used to gain access to the airlocks from within the complex. There is nothing else noteworthy about them, except what is indicated on the deck map.

Flooding

Calculating flood depth and flood speed for the horseshoe is complicated by the fact that pumping air into the ballast tanks will raise the entire complex above waterline. If the ballast control at the diving control center is not operated properly, internal flooding will occur. In some cases, flooding may be a desired effect — or even necessary, in order to extinguish burning areas.

A flooding chamber will fill to either the top of the opening which caused the flooding or to the depth given below. (Air which is trapped between the water and the ceiling prevents the water level from rising any further, even though ceiling height on each level is 10 feet.)

Flood depth by chambers: If the complex is afloat, assume the beginning waterline is even with the floor of the first deck. In this configuration, maximum flood depth for chambers is as follows:

First deck: 0 feet, 0 inches
 Second deck: 2 feet, 10 inches
 Third deck: 4 feet, 2 inches
 Fourth deck: 5 feet, 2 inches
 Fifth deck: 5 feet, 10 inches
 Sixth deck: 6 feet, 4 inches
 Seventh deck: 6 feet, 8 inches

If the complex sinks to the floor of the lagoon, any flooded area will accumulate more water:

First deck: 4 feet, 2 inches

Second deck: 5 feet, 2 inches
 Third deck: 5 feet, 10 inches
 Fourth deck: 6 feet, 4 inches
 Fifth deck: 6 feet, 8 inches
 Sixth deck: 6 feet, 11 inches
 Seventh deck: 7 feet, 1 inch

Flood depths may be reduced if the complex is raised from the water by filling the ballast tanks with air. Example: Agents set a 40-ounce charge of plastic explosive at the bottom of the exterior hatch of the wood storage area on the fifth deck. Igniting the charge blows a human-sized hole in the bottom of the hatch, and the chamber quickly floods to a depth of 5 feet, 10 inches (the "afloat" flood depth for the fifth deck). Meanwhile, the diving control center raises the complex to a position with four decks (instead of the usual one) above the water. For purposes of determining flood depth, this action makes the fifth deck effectively the second deck (the highest deck which is underwater in the present configuration of the complex). Water in the wood storage area would pour back out of the hole in the hatch until the depth is only 2 feet, 10 inches (the normal flood depth for the second deck when the complex is afloat with only one deck above water). When the complex is raised to this level, water depth in the ballast tanks is 21 feet.

Sinking the complex

In order to sink the complex to the floor of the lagoon, all 13 ballast tanks must be completely flooded to their full capacity (50-foot depth). The ballast controls in the diving control center automatically only allow 49 feet of water depth in the tanks; at this point, the complex lies just below the waterline and has achieved natural buoyancy. Piercing the floor of the seventh deck in the correct places and opening the proper hatches will release trapped air from the top foot of space inside the tanks, causing the complex to sink to the bottom in five minutes.

Supplementary information

As is so often the case in complex missions for which only general instructions are given, agents are probably not going to encounter what they "expect" to see. As has been noted earlier, Mad Merc is not even present in the horseshoe complex. A concerted effort to locate him, even if it succeeds, will consume valuable time and will certainly not tell the agents what they want to know about the horseshoe and the inhabitants of the island. If Mad Merc or any other personnel associated with the horseshoe are captured, they will refuse to talk and will attempt to escape. Anyone (including Mad Merc) who is captured and has not escaped within the limits of the 72-hour schedule will be left behind when the complex gets under way for its journey

toward Antarctica.

The Admin may find it useful to have a bit of background information available on Mad Merc and the missionaries. If desired, the information given below on these characters can be presented to player-agents at the start of the mission as facts obtained from official dossiers. Optionally, this information may not be revealed at all, or may only be revealed if agents are somehow able to obtain the information during the mission.

Mad Merc is the nickname (exact origin unknown) of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Martin Strikewell, an ex-commando in the British Army who rose to command rank during the Second World War. Little is known of his activities or whereabouts for the last several years. His name is familiar to the older generation as the man who was held responsible for a brutal raid on a German village in the closing weeks of the war. He was tried by the British after the war and dismissed from the armed services for acts of "excessive cruelty to civilians in a hostile territory."

Mad Merc is 61 years old, left-handed, and a Caucasian. It is known that he is confined to a wheelchair since having both legs amputated because of disease several years ago. (The special properties of his wheelchair are not generally known.)

For Administrator's information only: Although he was in fact guilty of the crimes described above, Mad Merc has mellowed considerably in the intervening years. His intentions on the island are not hostile, and the native population

has not been jeopardized by the presence of the horseshoe complex and its personnel. He intended to use the seclusion and protection of the atoll as a secret base of operations for the construction of a floating island. However, those plans had to be changed when the missionaries became suspicious of Mad Merc's purpose and attempted to report the presence of the complex via their weather-station radio. The missionaries were taken captive and will be detained for another 72 hours, to be released just before the horseshoe begins its journey — in search of an even more secluded spot in the Antarctic regions where it is hoped that construction can proceed without more obstacles.

Father Tuck is the leader of the three-man missionary staff. A Negro of English descent, he is 61 years old, has gray hair, stands 5'8" tall, and weighs 145 pounds.

Brother John is the youngest (18) of the three missionaries. He is a Caucasian, Danish by birth, who attended a seminary in England before being assigned to Alulu Island. he is 5'11", 165 pounds, with blond hair, and right-handed.

Brother Robin is 22 years old, a Caucasian of English descent, and (like John) a recent addition to the staff of the outpost. He stands 6'2", weighs 170 pounds, has blond hair and is right-handed.

The natives in both villages are not overly anxious about the presence of the horseshoe, since neither it nor the people who populate it have harmed them.

They are, however, naturally apprehensive about the way the complex rises and falls in the lagoon. The natives, including the chief (who resides in the village Mad Merc is not visiting), know nothing about the purpose of the complex — but they have been told to keep their walkie-talkies a secret from anyone who might visit the villages.

In order to keep the native population at ease, and because he likes to do it, Mad Merc has made several short trips to one village or the other, sometimes staying for two or three days. The trip he is on now is primarily a pleasure trip; even though the scheduled departure of the horseshoe is only a matter of hours away, there is no real need for him to be aboard until just before the engines are started.

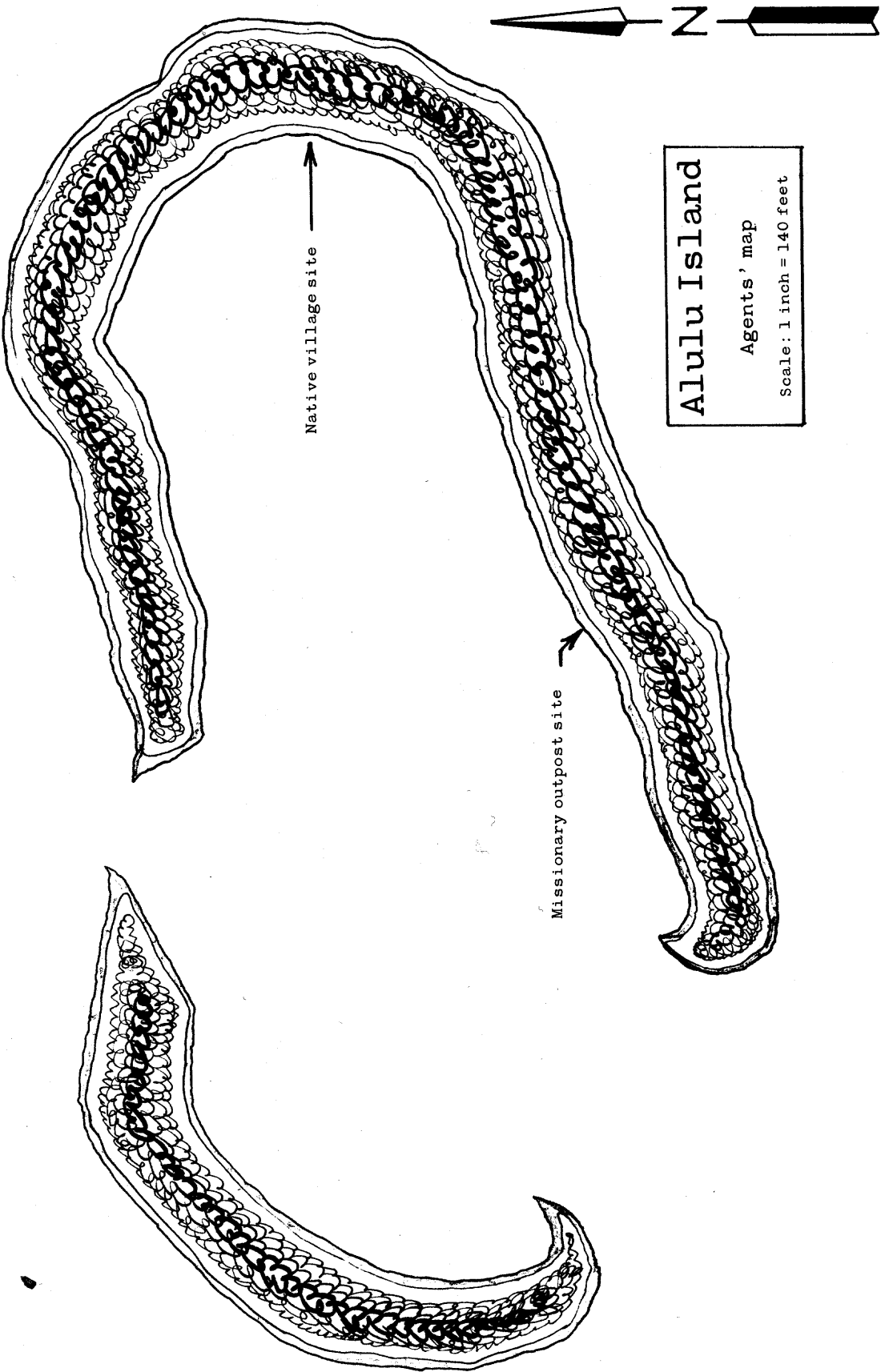
If investigating agents report the presence of the floating drydock to military officials, a military assault will not be initiated. Instead, the agents will be told to further investigate the structure, photographing it for later analysis, and to enter it if possible. Once they get inside they are to determine its function, its capabilities, and its future destination (if any).

Investigating agents who are captured will be searched, interrogated, and locked up in Sick Bay. They will *not* be released when the complex gets under way. If agents are caught or killed anywhere on the island or the complex, things will be made ready immediately for departure, and the complex will head for open sea and the safety of the chilly Antarctic shortly thereafter.

NON-PLAYER PERSONNEL TRAITS AND ABILITIES

	Primary traits													Languages			
	Sex	PS	Ch	W	Co	K	Cd	O	Dp	Ev	HH	Su	LL	J	E	M	G
Strikewell (Mad Merc)	M	52	102	101	102	72	51	77	102	77	129	179	15	—	86	71	77
Baker (Security Chief)	M	105	90	33	51	83	69	78	87	80	185	167	14	21	76	3	66
Drysdale (Guard)	F	70	85	79	66	96	88	68	76	87	157	163	15	17	90	2	81
Horse (Guard)	M	90	60	89	100	41	73	95	80	67	157	147	18	-	39	-	75
Krumm (Guard)	M	75	41	99	79	37	73	77	60	57	132	117	17	-	36	-	90
Nitt (Guard)	M	87	73	93	54	14	59	71	64	66	153	130	18	-	14	-	85
Rine (Guard)	M	93	54	95	72	86	89	83	63	74	167	137	19	19	80	9	85
Thompson (Guard)	F	65	97	24	19	99	97	42	58	97	162	156	9	66	98	73	41
Wicks (Guard)	M	98	36	98	96	76	53	97	71	45	143	116	19	20	70	10	35
Zyme (Guard)	M	77	29	71	94	63	91	86	62	65	142	127	15	2	60	-	79
Schwartzkopf (Con. E.)	F	83	47	74	65	95	24	45	67	36	119	104	16	13	80	-	93

Ekler (Con. E. Asst.)	F	65	84	71	55	87	04	30	70	88	153	143	14	4	76	-	81
Tanaka (Elect. Eng.)	M	48	24	85	62	98	93	78	43	60	108	122	13	91	82	31	72
Smith (Mech. Eng.)	F	29	94	75	89	81	78	85	88	117	163	10	7	79	-	60	
Hydrason (Nuc. Eng.)	M	99	66	44	34	99	89	67	50	78	176	112	14	15	95	3	89
Jones (Nuc. Asst.)	M	49	23	63	90	86	05	48	57	14	63	104	11	-	82	-	51
Hansen (Nuc. Asst.)	F	48	81	25	68	88	84	76	75	83	131	153	7	-	77	-	65
Watson (Computer)	F	19	08	51	38	97	50	44	23	28	47	64	7	12	96	-	76
Straum (Hydraulic Eng.)	F	48	06	19	44	81	57	51	25	63	111	107	7	-	42	-	71
Berkeley (Chem. Eng.)	M	60	18	82	28	94	70	49	23	44	104	72	14	-	90	-	39
Alexander (Welder)	M	94	57	51	82	52	40	61	55	49	153	104	15	-	50	-	81
Drimmler (Fitter)	F	44	48	86	83	95	87	86	66	68	112	134	13	11	87	-	67
Fox (Welder)	M	97	52	88	42	44	98	70	46	76	173	122	19	-	41	-	93
Harold (Fitter)	M	40	27	83	18	93	67	43	27	47	87	84	12	13	89	-	61
Horton (Maintenance)	M	86	03	81	13	81	42	28	08	23	109	33	17	9	77	-	42
Martinique (Maintenance)	F	67	05	28	07	96	74	42	06	24	91	30	10	91	81	-	33
DuBois (Crane Operator)	F	65	69	68	80	38	66	73	75	68	133	143	13	18	61	-	74
Tsuji (Crane Operator)	M	24	100	19	66	79	87	77	83	89	113	172	5	73	63	-	-
Atwood (Draft Tech.)	F	65	61	42	12	88	81	47	37	54	119	91	11	14	66	-	80
Detmer (Draft Tech.)	F	68	62	56	81	54	52	67	72	65	133	139	12	-	87	-	43
Box (Metal Labor)	M	69	60	75	61	50	73	67	60	66	135	126	14	82	-	82	-
Elton (Metal Labor)	M	94	45	97	85	53	86	85	65	65	159	130	19	86	88	-	20
Guild (Radar Operator)	F	45	80	45	25	15	30	28	53	55	100	108	9	-	43	-	84
Judge (Radar Operator)	F	55	01	45	19	58	01	10	10	01	56	11	10	-	12	84	84
Bat (Sonar Operator)	F	83	52	51	72	75	95	84	62	74	157	136	13	76	14	-	25
Dolphin (Sonar Operator)	M	61	11	49	43	38	32	38	27	22	83	49	11	-	61	-	86
DeForest (Radio Operator)	M	62	19	58	85	71	67	76	52	43	105	95	12	99	98	80	72
Marconi (Radio Operator)	F	36	07	34	55	100	79	67	31	43	79	74	7	91	97	81	88
Kingston (Ballast Control)	F	12	70	48	85	37	28	57	78	49	61	127	6	78	95	-	86
Flood (Ballast Control)	M	17	87	20	90	47	46	68	89	67	84	156	4	-	36	-	86
George (Quartermaster)	F	24	76	23	29	41	55	42	53	66	90	119	5	79	75	-	94
Koenig (Quartermaster)	M	90	61	70	49	40	70	60	55	66	156	121	16	-	65	-	87
Stew (Chief Steward)	F	42	88	41	98	95	37	68	93	63	105	156	8	-	99	-	90
Soup (Asst. Steward)	M	88	96	11	77	85	03	40	87	50	138	137	10	85	81	-	86
Doc (Medical Doctor)	F	79	32	02	47	97	42	45	40	37	116	77	8	-	85	-	39
Hurt (Medical Nurse)	M	41	72	37	102	85	61	55	79	120	134	8	78	05	-	54	
Broom (Janitor)	F	60	12	88	90	110	94	92	51	53	113	104	15	-	80	-	35
Vallier (Lauderer)	F	33	80	60	102	45	98	100	91	89	122	180	9	83	86	-	91
Foreman (Boatswain)	F	88	67	30	89	66	98	94	78	83	171	151	12	-	90	-	68
Begg (Purser)	M	77	74	48	27	74	98	63	51	86	163	137	13	-	81	-	95
Lange (Carpenter)	F	67	48	65	95	76	04	50	72	26	93	98	13	-	94		
Short (Electrician)	M	114	48	10	23	78	43	33	36	46	160	82	12	84	03	-	93
Father Tuck	M	55	62	71	70	76	59	65	66	61	116	127	13	-	79	78	-
Brother Robin	M	77	75	69	96	80	109	103	86	92	169	178	15	-	93	92	85
Brother John	M	122	62	66	90	66	102	96	76	82	204	158	19	79	86	86	-
Native chief	M	81	82	84	84	85	82	83	83	82	163	165	17	51	72	95	-



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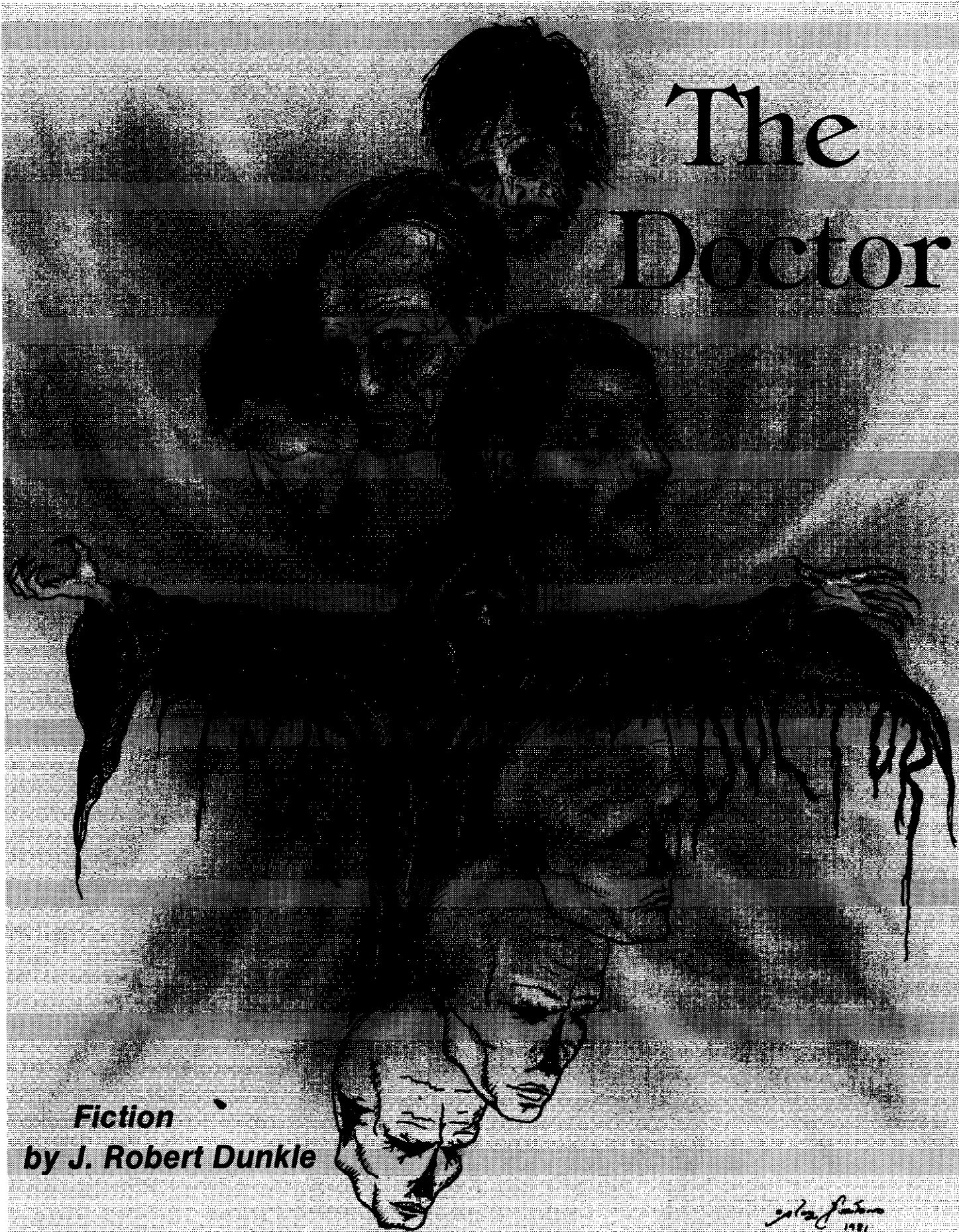
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The Doctor



Fiction
by J. Robert Dunkle

J. Robert Dunkle
1981

Like my father and his father before him, I am a doctor. Born into that certain strata of New England snobbery, I completed the expected rites of passage into adulthood *summa cum laude*: Exeter valedictorian, Princeton Phi Beta Kappa, Harvard Medical School. But it was all anticipated. My father wrote the book on modern orthopedic procedure; my mother toured the world ten years as a classical pianist before settling down to have a baby. In primary school my intelligence quotient was calculated at 190. I never really extended myself as I grew up. It was like playing a game of poker in which you bet however you chose because you always held four aces.

But there is an infinitude of distance between intelligence and genius. Intelligence concerns the ability to deal with objects already created and existing inside of definable parameters — ah, but the genius discards those parameters, to tiptoe into the space beyond.

I am a genius. The games of the modern intelligentsia — politics, business, academia — are but child's play. I have seen what *will* exist. The concerns of the past and present bore me.

Indeed, while my fellow medical students in the last years of our residency debated specialties, using such mundane guidelines as which fields promised higher Medicare returns or greater freedom for afternoon tennis, I was secure in the satisfaction of having known from the beginnings of my medical training what I must do. I was to be a surgeon, and the only specialty fulfilling my requirements was the area of cosmetic and reconstructive surgery — what you have long called plastic surgery. Yes, that field would serve my needs, very ironically.

Ah, you ask—why plastic surgery? Why would a genius want to spend his life scraping fatty tissue from purple, bloating sacs which hang like rotten grapes under the eyes of the aged, or cutting and tugging, like a small boy pressing bubbles out of his wet airplane decals, at an elderly lady's face to remove something as silly as wrinkles? How could I waste my skills in cosmetic surgery when people who were *dying* needed me?

But you see, I had none of these things in mind — none of them. Would I waste such a mind on trivialities — eyebags, hook noses, facial reconstructions on ignorant slugs who like everyone else were born ugly and stupid in the first place? I was chosen for another job. Inevitably, it would happen anyway. I was needed to initiate a predetermined evolutionary era. If people refused to use their god-given senses, I would eradicate them — all of them.

They are saying I am mad. What's the crime? Where are the victims? They came to me. It is my genius you cannot accept. Ah — the genius, the one who first sees what awaits the world. For he stands beyond the world a pace or two, and as he steps into a darkness which turns to light because of his own illumination, the world grows behind him, filling in the distance to the point where he had stood the moment before, yet like the Eleatic paradox, never catching him — for the genius can never be caught. Yes, there is, of course, that common breed of idiot, revered as intellectual by the masses, who equates genius with madness — pointing to the incidence of geniuses who have gone mad, and to the madmen who have emerged at times in the history of the world to startle mankind with their lucidity and insight.

True, the genius and the madman share a common domain: They exist outside the world. But the dissimilarity is only too evident. The madman hovers outside the world with his umbilicus floating along beside him — it has snapped, and he can neither pull himself back to earth, nor pull the world along behind him. Most important, the madman never had a choice — the world cut his umbilicus for him.

Certainly the genius walks in the void too, but he is in self-exile, not forced. He may sever the umbilicus — but it will always be his choice and only his. If he chooses not to cut, his umbilicus is stronger than steel cable, and he walks into the unknown and

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forcibly drags the rest of the world behind him — the insensitive the blind, the mass of real screaming lunatics. They eventually; see what he has seen and call the vision their own. But the genius eats ambrosia. The rest of the world eats his leavings.

Mad? I have merely been providing the world a service it was begging for, merely hastening the inevitable. It will come to this anyway; how can it not? Again I ask: Where is my crime when no one will step forward in accusation, when all I have done is administer my skills to those who asked?

And yet, you detain me. Must I, like Galileo, say that what exists does not? Can you not see the fulfillment radiating from their faces? My work was more exquisite and precise than they ever imagined possible.

Ah, I see. . . they cannot be mad! Not so *many* — not so many madmen. Too many people like everyone else: family men, baby-sitters, mothers, honor students, children — they cannot be mad, not all of them. So I must take the blame. But they chose me. Don't you understand? They chose me!

Inished my residency at Johns Hopkins. My superiors saw me as strange, a loner, yet marveled at my speed and control.

It scared them, because they sensed an apparent purposefulness in my every motion which the absurdities and meaninglessness of the world did not warrant — especially for one of my intelligence.

The day of my graduation, I headed straight for New York, for I knew that there, in one of the largest areas of human concentration on earth, where civilization has spawned some of its thickest and blackest ganglia of malignancy, I was most needed.

I did not know how to begin. Perhaps I would walk the slums. A small injection of sodium pentothal, put them in the van, and cart them back to the office. It would be so messy. It would take the rest of my lifetime just to begin, but it had to be done.

But *they* came to me! I should have expected it, but I still was dumbfounded. They came to me! Within three days a man of about sixty, no distinguishing characteristics, neither poor nor elegant, possibly a clerk, a lawyer, an insurance salesman — neat, well dressed, but otherwise nondescript, came to my door. He said nothing, yet faced me with a prescient look of expectation, eyes palpitating with a desperate need. I merely nodded an affirmation and led him down the hall into the room. After a short examination, I initiated the first of the series of operations.

The next day another came — a woman slightly younger than the man — a housewife? A schoolteacher? I asked nothing, sensing that her need was the same as the man's.

Before my work was halted, I had nearly a thousand patients. Every day, more had come to knock at my door — a door which didn't have a name or number on its glass. Nor did I list myself in the directory. I had no telephone. They just came — the old, children, whites, blacks, drunks, businessmen, teachers, truck drivers, housewives. I refused no one. I worked all but three hours a day. I slept on my own operating table. I ate almost nothing. I charged nothing for my services. . . .

Doctor!" I looked up into the brown eyes of the state's attorney. Beyond his shoulder, in the seats usually reserved for spectators, sat as many of my patients as could be fitted into the courtroom. The usual spectators had not been allowed. It is typical in insanity cases merely to plead the case to the judge.

Thus, there was no jury, either. But the state had wished to confront the judge with what it felt was the strongest evidence against me — my patients.

"Doctor. I asked you a question. Are you going to answer?"

"Of course, Would you repeat it, please?"

"Explain to the judge exactly the manner of the operations you performed."

"I've repeated this dozens of times."

"Yes, we know — but please — for the record."

"All the operations were uncomplicated for one of my abilities — simple surgical procedures, which did, however, require prolonged periods of recuperation between separate operations. Again I ask you, how can you hold me? These people always came back until the process was complete. Have any of them ever complained? Do any of those involved in the process complain now? I didn't even advertise; I coerced no one. You're just scared because you see yourselves."

"Yes, yes. We know, doctor, but will you continue?"

"The operations were elementary. Their sequential order was of no importance. Eventually, at the end of the series of operations, the results were the same. It was a simple process to remove the tympanic membranes, those small discs attached to our own vestigial remnants of gill slits. At the same time, I would remove both of the trumpet-shaped flaps of elastic cartilage and skin, the pinna."

"What's that, doctor?"

"The ear. It was no longer necessary to leave them attached. As I have said to you inquisitors before, I worked metaphorically as well as functionally."

"The tongue was easily clipped at its base —and my skill as a surgeon is too great to have ever had a problem with hemorrhaging. The eyes were a simple matter of snipping the six ocular muscles, tying them back, severing the optic nerve, and removing the eyeball. With proper care, the sockets healed very quick-

ly. It was also an easy procedure to amputate the third joint of each of the phalanges of the fingers and the second joint of the thumb, but I would only do a few per session. The stubs were fitted with stainless steel caps; as you can see, they look like thimbles."

"And I would usually save the nose for last because I was cognizant of the roots of my craft. In ancient India it was common practice to remove a person's nose for a criminal offense. Thus, there was a demand for artificial noses, and the art of facial reconstruction was born. It was satisfying to see my circle of patients —people who now rejected the nose, and me, my genius, pressed into service to dismantle all that had been constructed before. . . ."

"You are right — the sense of smell can be eradicated easily enough by removing the olfactory epithelium and olfactory lobe. But again, I stress the need I have for symbolic as well as functional success in my operations. As with the ear, the actual physical protrusion we call the nose — once deprived of its sense of smell — is an anomaly. It was an uncomplicated matter to remove it — much easier, actually, than the toils of doctors who, working in the wrong evolutionary direction, struggle to reinstate damaged and defective sensory mechanisms."

I looked around the room at my patients. Most of the ones present had finished the series of operations. They sat sluggish, dull, still — not unlike the judge, the lawyer. . . and myself. The gaping holes formed symmetrical, upside-down pyramids on their faces. I was content.

The sound of a thousand steel fingertips tapping on varnished hardwood in the rhythm of applause broke my silence.

"Your Honor!"

"They came to me!"

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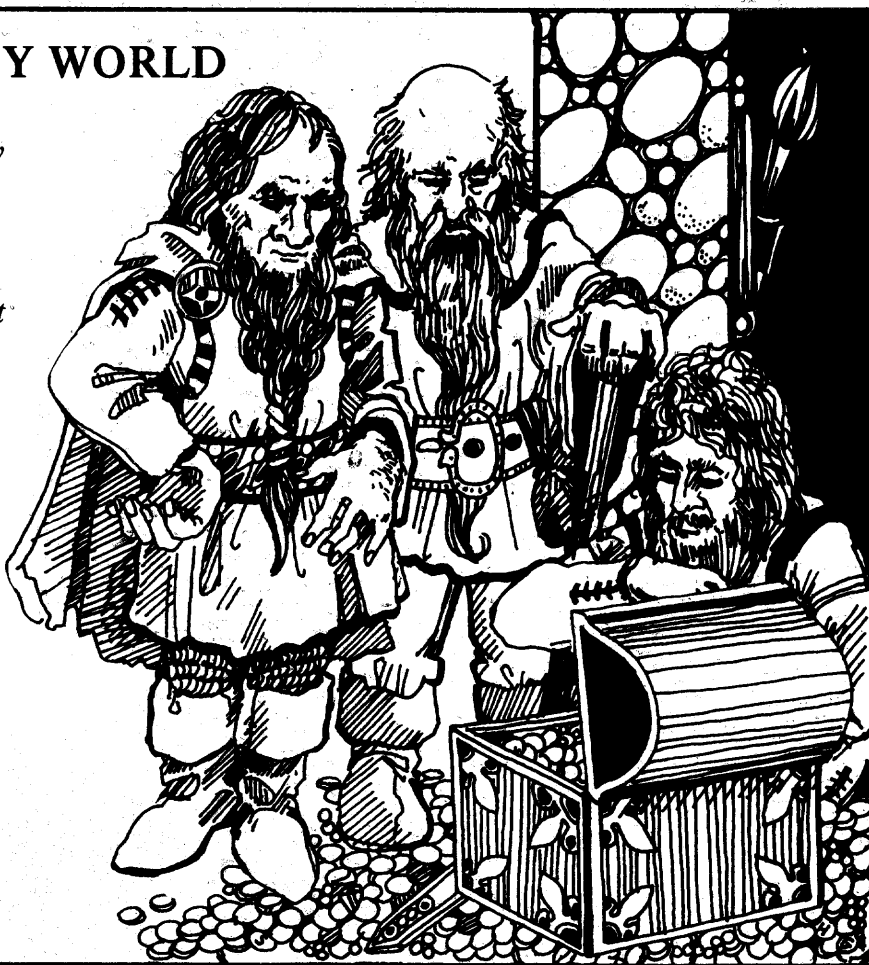
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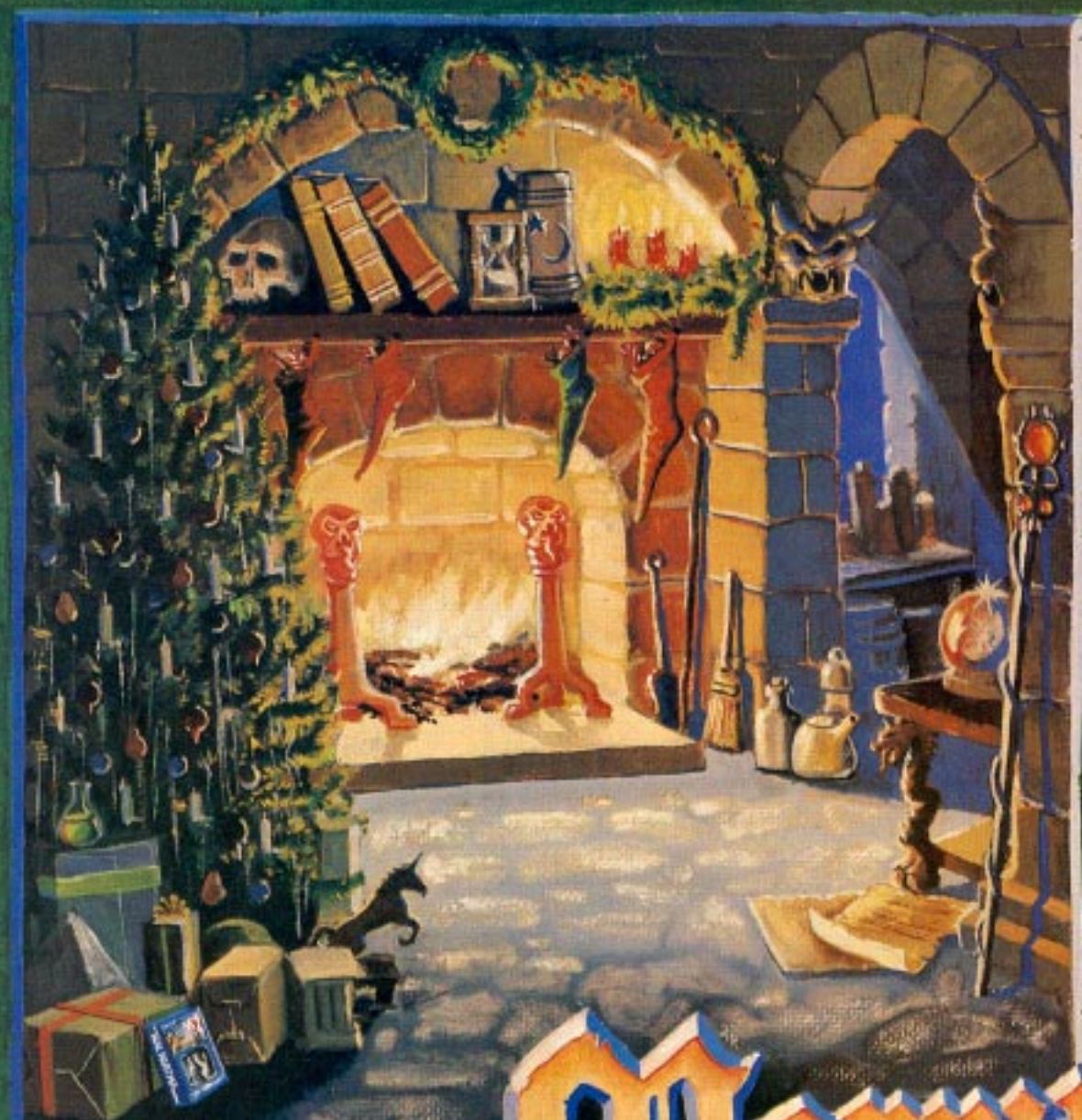
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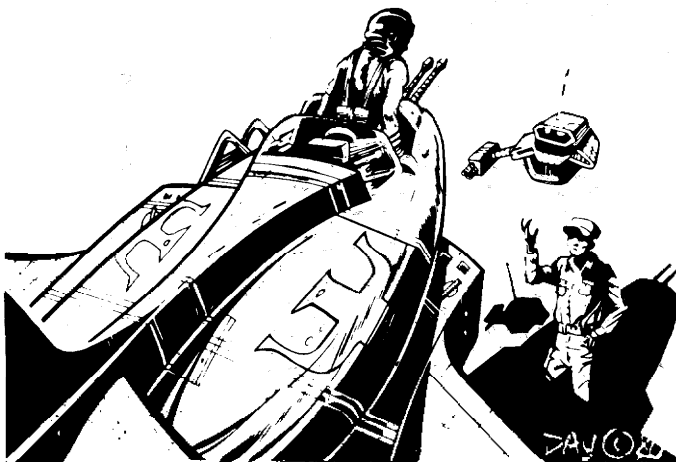
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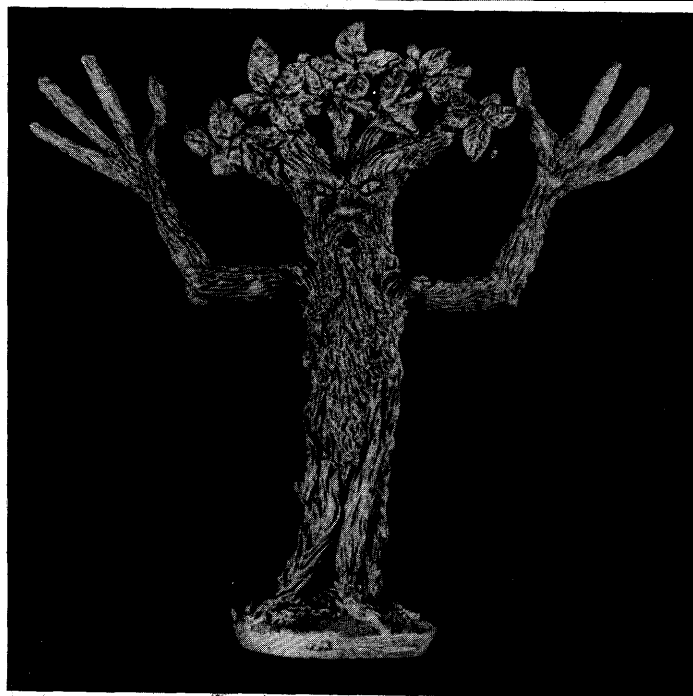
BROADSWORD MINIATURES



Troll

Prop:5 Det:5
Anim:6 Tech:6

This homely, buck-toothed troll brandishes a club and has a rock in his other hand for good measure.



Ent

Prop: 6 Det: 7
Anim: 6 Tech: 6

One of the more impressive figures of this creature type on the market today, this sculpture achieves an impression of strength and menace. The "hair" and leaves are nicely detailed, and the eyes deliver a piercing stare when painted up properly.

Reviews by
Bill Fawcett

Photographs by
Kathy O'Donnell

RAL PARTHA



Evil wizard

Prop: 5
Det: 6
Anim: 8
Tech: 6

This dynamically posed figure offers the added benefit of a nicely detailed base that contains a staff, books, and even a skeletal hand. The clenched fist and facial expression appropriately convey the air of a magic-user about to cast a spell.



Storm Giant

Prop: 6 Det: 6
Anim: 8 Tech: 6

This figure is excellently animated, with hair and clothes swirling back and the arm raised menacingly with a lightning bolt about to be hurled. The arm comes unattached and fits into a depression in the right shoulder, which allows some degree of instant customizing.

Eric's dragon won even more treasure



When Eric Heaps brought this dragon to the Great Gen Con Open Miniature Painting Contest at the GEN CON® convention, it already had quite a hoard of treasure to guard. When the contest judging was over, the dragon was even richer: The display pictured at left won Best of Show honors.

Eric, who lives in Milwaukee, Wis., used Heritage Models' "Great Dragon" in 25mm scale as the nucleus of the diorama. Besides being realistically painted to resemble a ferocious red dragon, Eric's figure includes such touches as "real" saliva dripping from the dragon's jaws, simulated with epoxy.

The treasure pile is a conglomeration of materials from many sources, including Grenadier's Wizards and Warriors figure sets, dollhouse-style miniature accessories, and mixed and matched weapons, chests, coffers and whatnot.

Polly S paints were used for all parts of the diorama except the metallic treasure, which was painted with Testor's enamel. The finished product was truly deserving of the honors it received. In the words of contest coordinator Kim Eastland, "There were better painters (in the contest), but no one did as good a job on the setting."

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Dragon's Bestiary

Shroom

Created by Lew Pulsipher

FREQUENCY: *Rare*
 NO. APPEARING: 2-8
 ARMOR CLASS: 6
 MOVE: 12"
 HIT DICE: 4x3
 % IN LAIR: 25%
 TREASURE TYPE: C
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-6
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Surprise on 1-4, hug*
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: *None*
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*
 INTELLIGENCE: *Low*
 ALIGNMENT: *Chaotic neutral*
 SIZE: M
 PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*
 Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*

A shroom (plural: shroom) has a body like that of a small, thin bear. When standing on two legs, as it often does, a shroom is about 5½ feet high. It weighs about 250 pounds. Instead of bear-like jaws, the shroom has a small, dog-like mouth and snout. Shrooms have limited color-changing ability, the fur ranging from a dirty green-brown to black depending on the surroundings. When moving on all fours, a shroom is silent, surprising enemies two-thirds of the time.

The shroom prefer to capture rather than kill their larger, more intelligent victims, while they eat smaller creatures such as dogs, rabbits, and squirrels. If forced by hunger, a shroom will even eat plants, but they are basically carnivorous.

Shrooms hold victims for ransom, or sometimes to eat later if they become bored or hungry — the outcome is unpredictable. Sometimes a victim is used as bait to trap more creatures. The shrooms make eccentric ransom demands, either in person or through a note written by the victim or an associated creature. They may require large amounts of honey, for example, refusing any substitute. At other times they will want gems or coins, at others seemingly useless objects like sacks or jars. One can rarely negotiate with the shroom, who are liable to forget all about a deal and eat the captive if they become bored with the proceedings. It is best either to comply or attempt a rescue immediately.

While shrooms can rarely (20%) read common, and have no written language of their own, they can often (50%) speak common, and all can speak the align-



ment tongue of chaotic neutral. Although of low intelligence, shrooms are cunning. They capture creatures throughout their 40-year life spans, and have a fund of traditional tricks and tactics to draw upon, so that they often seem to be more intelligent than they actually are.

A shroom trained from birth can be a loyal, though stupid, servant, if well treated. Even cold-hearted dopplegangers have been known to treat shrooms kindly, for the shroom can be of obvious help by capturing characters whom the master can then imitate.

On the other hand, the trained shroom knows none of the traditional tricks of his species, he will not obey anyone but his original master. However, no shroom more than a week old can be trained. A captive, pregnant, female shroom will kill her cub immediately after birth. Though the shrooms delight in capturing others, they hate captivity themselves.

The shroom attack with two slapping

paws, usually attempting to subdue. A successful hit causes real damage 25% of the time, while the rest of the time the damage is only temporary. When the total of real plus temporary damage is at least equal to the hit points of the target, it is unconscious. Victims are normally tied up with strong, flexible vines, though the shrooms sometimes use rope taken from captives. In their lair the shrooms lock captives in windowless "rooms" — caves, hollow trees, or whatever is available. When the victim awakes (1-6 turns after becoming unconscious), the temporary damage is gone.

A shroom may *dimension door* once per day (leading to speculation that there is a distant relationship to the unicorn). Normally, a shroom will knock out a victim and then carry it off using *dimension door*. If both paws hit the same target in the same round, the shroom hugs the victim. This causes only 1-3 additional points of damage, but it enables the shroom to *dimension door* with the victim in hand and still conscious, if the shroom so desires.

Shrooms rarely use their *dimension door* power before they have knocked out or grabbed a victim, but occasionally some will *dimension door* into or behind a party of adventurers, causing enough confusion to allow other shrooms to rush up on foot and carry off victims via *dimension door*.

Shrooms are sometimes bold, sometimes cautious. Capture is for them an enthralling sport, but not a necessity of life. If a "snatch" is not working out, the shroom will flee rather than fight to the death.

Shroom females can bear one cub per year. Since there is no mating season as such, only 2% of any cubs encountered will be less than a week old. The shroom social structure resembles that of some monkeys, with one dominant male. The "number appearing" refers to adults found together away from the lair. When in the lair, which may be underground, in mountains, or in thick brush or hollow trees, there will be twice as many adults, plus one cub per two females (the number of males and females is roughly equal). Cubs fight at reduced hit dice and damage according to age, and cannot *dimension door*. Shrooms mature in one year. The lair may (30%) contain a captive of some intelligent species, not necessarily human.

Colfel

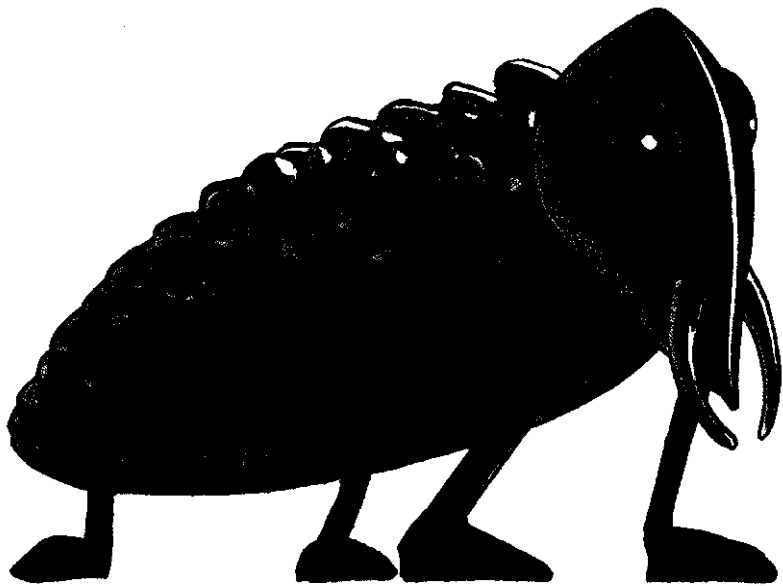
Created by Richard Lucas

FREQUENCY: *Rare*
 NO. APPEARING: 3-10 (20-50)
 ARMOR CLASS: 4
 MOVE: 12"
 HIT DICE: 7x8
 % IN LAIR: 30%
 TREASURE TYPE: G
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 or 3
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: 6-16 or 2-5/2-5/1-12
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Energy drain*
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Immunity to cold*
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Saving throws as 21st-level magic-user*
 INTELLIGENCE: *High*
 ALIGNMENT: *Neutral evil*
 SIZE: *M*
 PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*
 Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*

The colfel, a native of the Negative Material plane, has appeared on the Prime Material only rarely in the recent past, probably due to summonings by powerful magicians desiring greater and more powerful servants. These creatures often compound their strength by banding together into large groups. Rarely will fewer than four or five be encountered. Also, they are highly intelligent, and attack and react accordingly, so they are very dangerous monsters even when fighting vastly superior opposition. A deadly tactic they often use is that of ganging up on just one member of a group of opponents, and attacking until this victim is dead before moving onto the next. Up to four colfel can attack one human-sized creature at the same time.

Colfel usually attack first by charging into a melee and spearing with their horns. The second and subsequent attacks are claw/claw/bite routines.

Colfel have several attributes similar



to those of the greater undead. The first is complete immunity to cold- or ice-based attacks of any form. (Colfel consider brown mold excellent food, and if they find a patch they will nurture it carefully. There is a 5% chance on any encounter with colfel that a bed of brown mold will be nearby.) The second undead-like attribute is a low-strength energy drain that draws life energy equivalent to 1,000 experience points from an opponent each time the colfel scores a hit with one of its physical attacks.

Colfel also have several weaknesses which, like their strengths, are related to their association with the Negative Material plane. In direct sunlight or its equivalent, they suffer 1 point of damage per round they are exposed. For this reason they venture out of doors only at night, and are always found underground or in the deepest, darkest jungles or forests. They take one and a half times normal damage from all kinds of fire.

Colfel also suffer damage directly from the following spells: *light* (3 hit points);

continual light (6 HP); *faerie fire* (1 HP per level of caster); *pyrotechnics*, fireworks form (12 HP); *dancing lights* (1d4 HP); *co/or spray* (2d8 HP); *prismatic spray* (4d6HP additional damage); *sunburst*, as from a *wand of illumination* (6d6HP); and *prismatic sphere* (or *wall*) (1 HP per segment if within 10"). Each spell except the *prismatic sphere* or *prismatic wall* is absorbed and negated when a colfel enters its area of effect.

Proximity to normal fires is also damaging to these creatures; torches (2 HP each), lanterns (4 HP each), and bonfires (3d4 + 3 HP) are quenched and simultaneously injure a colfel when it approaches within 5 feet of one.

Physical description: The colfel is a large quadruped, about 6 feet long and standing 3 feet high at the shoulder. It has black, slimy, furless skin that appears very much like gangrenous flesh. Its eyes are midnight black with star-white pupils, and the nose is tipped by a pair of sharp prongs. A row of spikes runs down its knobby back.

Gem Vars

Created by Michael C. Reed

FREQUENCY: *Rare*
 NO. APPEARING: 3-78
 ARMOR CLASS: -7 (diamond) or 1 (ruby)
 MOVE: 9"
 HIT DICE: *See below*

As their name implies, these creatures are physically composed of the appropriate gem stones. They are humanoid in form, being bipedal with two arms. They can see in total darkness for as far as 200 feet, and their eyes glow in the dark,

% IN LAIR: 30%
 TREASURE TYPE: 1
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-10 or by weapon type
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: 25%
 INTELLIGENCE: *low*
 ALIGNMENT: *See below*
 SIZE: S (2-4 feet tall)
 PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*
 Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*

which makes the eyes visible to other creatures or characters from up to 30 feet away in near or total darkness. They have no ears, and a total lack of muscle tissue and body hair.

Gem vars are created by a fairly simple


but obscure formula which may be found in an old wizard's spell book (an old book, not necessarily an old wizard), or perhaps as a page in a magical tome found in a treasure trove. The procedure: An appropriate gem stone (diamond or ruby) of at least 10,000gp value must have cast upon it, in this order and consecutively without interruption, these spells: *stone to flesh*, *enlarge*, *animate dead*, *infravision*, and *strength*.

A gem var will be aligned neutrally with respect to law and chaos, with its outlook on good and evil determined by the alignment of the creator. Thus, a gem var will either be true neutral, neutral good or neutral evil.


Gem vars are totally loyal to their creator until that character has died or the

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gem var is released from service. While under the influence of their creator, gem vars serve effectively as minions or hirelings, though they will not willingly put themselves in obviously dangerous positions unless a substantial reward of gems or jewelry is promised. At any given time, a magic-user can manufacture and have under his/her control one gem var for each point of intelligence currently possessed by the caster.

Individual gem vars that have become "unemployed" will seek out others in similar circumstances, intending to become a member of a small band. A group of gem vars released at the same time from the same creator will always form their own band and will not accept others of their kind (singly or as a group) which were released from a different creator, unless the two groups are of the same alignment.

Independent gem vars may sell their services for gems and jewelry, which they prize above all else, even magic items. Gem vars are able to find any accumulation of gems or jewelry (more than 4 pieces) within 12" of them.

For combat purposes, gem vars are treated as 8-hit-die monsters; however, they do not have a prescribed number of hit points, nor do they take damage from physical attacks the way most other creatures do.

Edged weapons are ineffective against gem vars, and they cannot be killed intact when attacked with blunt weapons. Any time a single physical attack on a gem var causes 15 points of damage or more, there is a 30% chance the creature will be killed, shattering into 101-200 (d% + 100) pieces. If it does not shatter, it will fight at half effectiveness (i.e., as a 4-die monster, then as a 2-die monster, but never lower than 1) thereafter. Any time a single strike does at least 5 points of damage, there is a 20% chance the blow will cause 1-4 pieces to be chipped off the creature's body.

A non-physical (magical) attack which causes a certain amount of hit-point damage will affect a gem var (except for the immunities noted below) similarly to a physical attack. However, a spell attack which does 15 or more points of damage will kill the gem var without shattering it (unless, of course, the shattering is a natural effect of the spell), and a spell attack which causes at least 5 points of damage has a 50% chance of reducing the gem var's effective hit dice in half.

Gem var pieces are worth whatever value a jeweler will place on the size of the gem stone. A 4' tall ruby specimen, killed intact, is worth 71,000-90,000gp (d20 + 70). A 4' tall diamond specimen, killed intact, is worth 81,000-100,000gp (d20 + 80).

Gem vars are impervious to *charm* and *sleep* spells. They are also immune to all fire- and cold-based attacks.



Being endowed with great strength, gem vars are limited in weapon use only by their size. They prefer to use long (two-handed) swords, battle axes, javelins, spears, and light crossbows.

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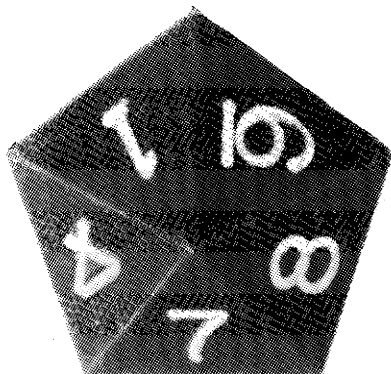
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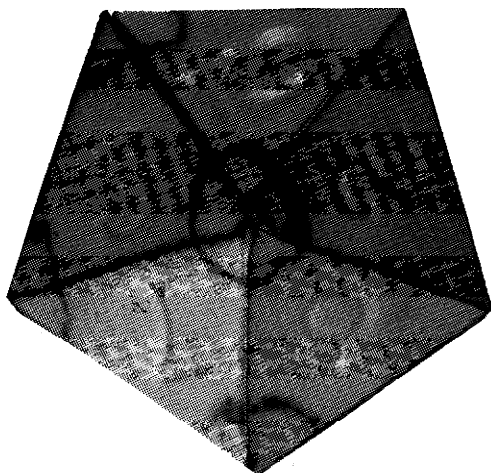
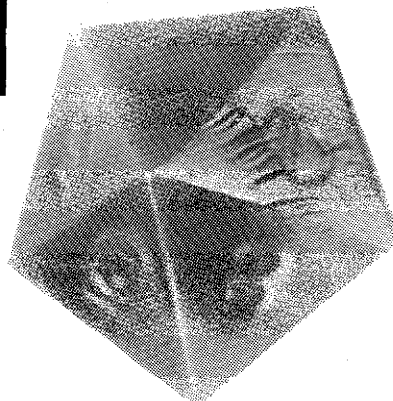
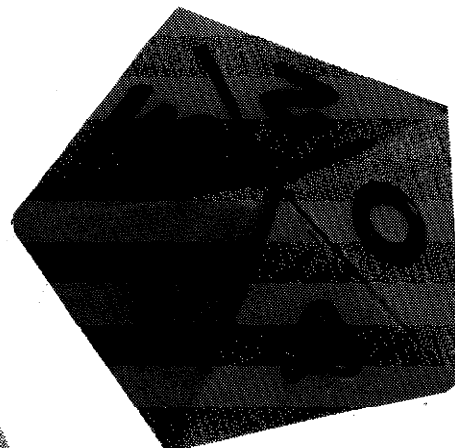
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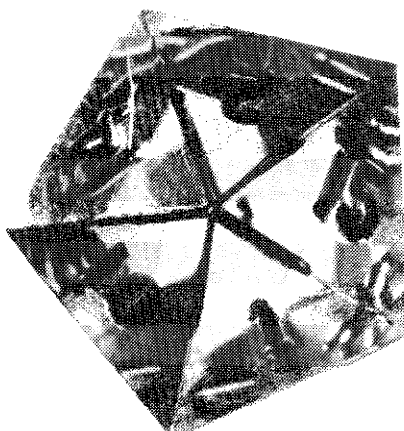
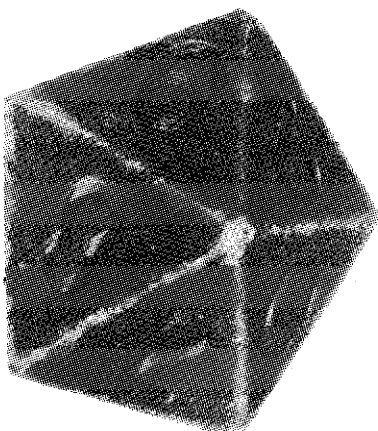
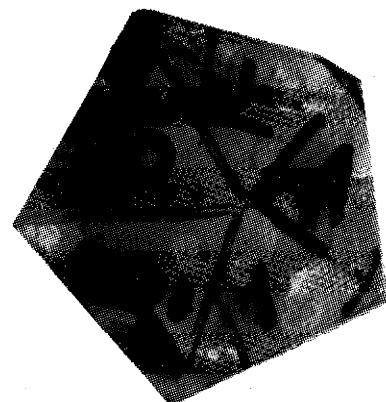


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Two mini-winners by Task Force

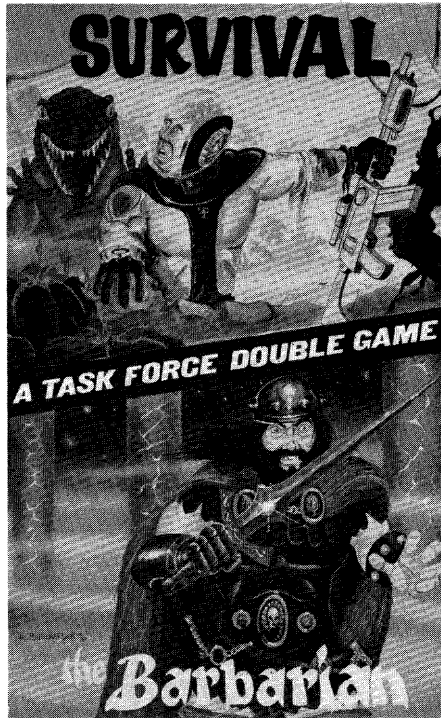
Reviewed by Tony Watson

In the last couple of years, Task Force Games has published a number of SF and fantasy titles, most of them in a pocket-game format. This form, both in packaging and game complexity, seems a direct reply to the mini-game style of Metagaming's MicroGame™ line and the like. Task Force's efforts have been commendable; the games have been, with few exceptions, quite good and the physical quality has been very high.

SURVIVAL/THE BARBARIAN is a package of two games, teaming an SF design with a fantasy effort. Its physical components include an 8½" x 5½", 12-page rulebook, with a full-color cover; 108 multicolored, die-cut counters; two 11" x 17" maps; and an information sheet, all packaged in a ziplock bag.

SURVIVAL is a space game. It depicts the plight of a Scout pilot whose starship has crashed on a hostile planet. He must make his way to a rescue station across the map, picking his way through various types of terrain and battling a host of randomly appearing beasts, each intent on having him for dinner. This is the scenario for the basic game, a solitaire situation pitting the player against the system. Other scenarios are included, providing activity for more players. Two to six people can compete in "race" or "survival of the fittest" scenarios. Another scenario allows for a rescue attempt by one Scout searching for another who is wandering around aimlessly. Two scenarios deal with hunting, one where players compete for points by racking up kills on the local fauna, or one in which a crafty Lord has invited his arch-rival along on a hunting expedition, with the rival to serve as the quarry (sort of a "Most Dangerous Game" in space).

The system to handle these situations is very simple. First, each player chooses



weapons from an assortment including auto-pistols, rifles, laser carbines, light swords, ram-grenade launchers and spears. Each weapon is rated for combat adds in ranged fire and melee, ammo allowance, and weight. The last is important, since each man is limited in what he can carry and must choose between a number of small weapons or one or two heavy ones. A starting hex is determined randomly, and play begins.

Seven types of terrain, each with a different effect on movement, cover the map. A die roll is made for each hex entered; on a roll of 4-6 a critter (exact type depending on the terrain) attacks. The defending human gets one round of ranged fire and then melee is joined. In both instances, combat is resolved by equalling or exceeding the target's defense strength on a die throw, plus combat adds. Scouts can take up to six wounds, while animals die after one (unless the optional animal wound allowances are used). Scouts can gain a wound back for each night period (every third turn) that they spend resting.

SURVIVAL is very reminiscent of a *Traveller* scenario, from the terminology used in the rules to the combat system, which is a simplified version of that used in GDW's role-playing game.

THE BARBARIAN is a rather abstract treatment of the old quest theme; a barbarian sets off to search for the legacy of his grandfather, a sword and shield once used to keep chaos at bay.

The map delineates six regions, each of a different type of terrain, with a road snaking through them. One player plays the role of Vaarn the barbarian, while the other controls the creatures that inhabit the various regions (the game also works well solitaire).

It is Vaarn's task to enter each region and search out the randomly placed chit for the area. Three are dummies, one is a curse which slows the barbarian's movement by half once it is discovered, and two are the sword and shield. Upon Vaarn's entering each region, the creatures for that area are activated. A specific type and number of monsters occupy each area; for example, the steppes are the home of the zombies, and wraiths are the denizens of the desert. The rules also provide for optional encounters on the road.

The combat procedure is very similar to that used in *Survival*. Two dice are thrown; if the resulting number matches or exceeds the defender's defense number, a wound is scored. Vaarn can take 20 wounds, while what the creatures can absorb varies with their type. Vaarn wins by snatching up the artifacts and getting off the map, provided he has also cleared at least three regions of all their defenders.

Survival/The Barbarian is a package that has a number of things to recommend it. The games are simple and quick, playing in 15 to 45 minutes, and would serve as something light for passing a half-hour or so. They also have excellent solitaire prospects. Their physical components are very nice; well made, colorful and attractive. In the small-game market, Task Force's physical presentation is hard to beat.

While the games play well, most accomplished gamers will find them far too simple. *The Barbarian* is highly abstract, and while it works as a game, most fantasy buffs will scoff at what's going on. *Survival* is better conceived, but suffers a bit from the fact that the players are allowed too few chances to affect the outcome. Once the weapons to be carried are selected (really half the game), the only meaningful decision a player makes for a Scout is picking the path to the station. Creatures appear at random, and combat isn't much more than a series of die rolls. With a little work, *Survival* could have been made into more than just a run through a gauntlet of hostile monsters. Both games will please those people looking for something easy and quick, but gamers after a real challenge should look elsewhere.

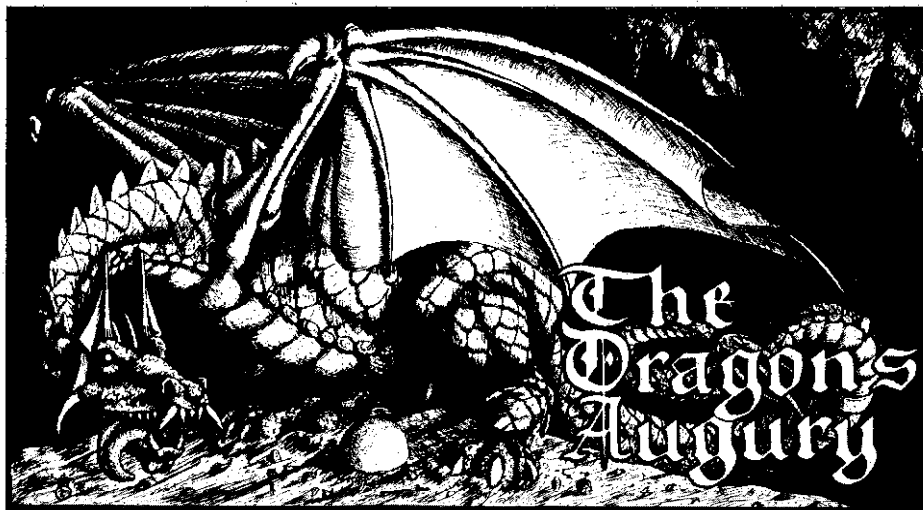
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Have fun with zombies

Reviewed by Tony Watson

DAWN OF THE DEAD is a game based on George Romero's movie of the same title. The game, and presumably the film before it (this reviewer has not seen the movie), is a situation in which four humans are matched against a shopping mall (yes, a shopping mall) chock full of zombies. The humans endeavor to "kill" all the zombies and seal off the mall from the outside world. The zombie player attempts to either kill (and eat; the rules state: "A killed character's counter is immediately removed from play. He has been eaten.") the humans or infect them with whatever caused the zombies to become zombies. Infected characters risk becoming "super-zombies" and leading the fight against their former friends.

Dawn of the Dead's 11" x 17" playing map depicts a shopping mall over which a grid of irregularly sized squares has been superimposed. Shops, stores, restaurants and the like are represented, complete with symbols indicating the type of goods available therein and titles for the businesses, some of which are quite humorous. For example, the mall's large department store is called "Nick-el's" and one could purchase an ice cream cone at "33 Flavors" or some electronic kits at "Radio Shanty." The only pertinent terrain features are the four large, main entrance doors, and the solid and glass doors around the interior.

The counter mix includes 50 zombies, the front of the counter displaying a zombie's face and the back indicating the zombie's value for combat purposes. This value remains hidden (from both players) until needed for combat. Four humans are pitted against the zombie hordes; they are rated for the number of times they may attack per turn (2 to 5), panic level (1 to 3) and movement rate (12 to 20). The back of the counter can

be shown to indicate stun status for a given character. Infected characters, with lower values, use a second set of counters, which are backprinted with the dreaded superzombie face.

The goal of the humans is to link up (they begin the game in the same corner of the mall, but in different stores) and make their way across the mall to the sporting goods store. Two of the characters are SWAT team members and armed with M-16's, but the others carry only pistols and must be armed with hunting rifles to fulfill the victory conditions. The humans must also close all of the main doors, thus preventing new zombies from entering, and — perhaps most important — zap all the zombies in the mall. The Zombie player seeks to frustrate this by killing or turning into superzombies three of the humans. This requirement is lowered to two if one of the characters is the sole female. This adds a nice Hollywood touch; poor Fran is most often the target of zombie attacks and the subject of heroic rescues by the males.

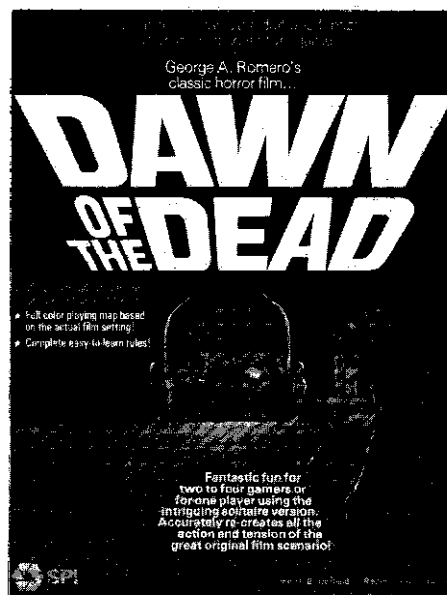
The mechanics of play are quite different for the two sides. The human player can move one character or stack of characters per turn and cannot move the same person or group two turns in a row. The concept is a bit odd, but works well in play. Human movement allowances are high, and they are very mobile. Only stopping to open or close doors, or moving through zombie squares, slows them down.

At any point in a move, a human unit can make an attack. Attacks consume no movement points. To kill a zombie, the zombie's strength must be equalled or exceeded by the dice roll(s) of the attacking unit(s). Rifle fire allows two dice, pistols allow one, and any two weapons in combination allow three dice. The result of the roll(s) may be modified down for range or for firing through doors.

The real bane of the humans is panic, against which a die-roll check must be made each time a human seeks to fire at berserk or superzombie units, or zombies in the same square. Failure to throw higher than the panic value halts all further movement or fire for that character in that turn, which can sometimes leave him/her in a precarious position. Feminists will be irked that Fran panics more often than her male companions.

The zombie player has a lesser degree of control over his units (which seems to make a certain amount of sense — they are, after all, zombies). The zombie player rolls to see if a particular zombie becomes berserk (and thus faster and able to break down glass doors), and to see if previously berserk zombies lose that status. Then all zombies that were in sight of any hex traversed during the previous human movement phase are moved one square toward those humans. A die is rolled, and that number of zombies may be moved one square according to the player's desire. Berserk zombies can attempt to break through closed glass doors, which regular zombies cannot do, and have a movement of two instead of one.

Zombies ending up in the same square as a human can attack, after undergoing possible defensive fire; the zombie's value is cross-indexed with the throw of two dice to see if the human is affected by either a "stun" or "infected" result. Stunned characters can't do anything until roused by another character entering the hex; infected characters have lower values and can turn into super-zombies with advanced movement and combat capabilities if a 2 or 12 is thrown on two dice. The zombie player completes his turn by rolling for reinforcements that arrive via the main doors (presumably these are zombies that just wander in from the street). Sealed doors



prevent the entry of more zombies, another incentive for the human player to get them closed.

Dawn of the Dead has a solitaire version, and the solo game plays just about as well due to the lack of decisions the zombie player needs to make. The only real change is in a hidden-zombie rule, which in the two-player game allows the zombie player to hide five zombies and

spring them on the humans during the course of the game. The solitaire game substitutes a randomly appearing zombie rule.

The game is fast-paced and a fair amount of fun, despite its decidedly macabre nature. It is definitely more fun for the human player, who can run around and blast away at the hapless monsters. The zombie player has to win

early, while he has the humans separated and boxed into a corner. If the humans can link up into pairs and get into the open, they can use their high movement values to run up, zap a couple of zombies, and retreat into relative safety. This perhaps is the game's greatest flaw.

Dawn of the Dead is available boxed for \$6 from SPI, 257 Park Avenue South, New York NY 10010.

The Argon Gambit/ Death Station

Reviewed by Bill Fawcett

The Argon Gambit/Death Station is the third double adventure set produced by GDW for use with its *Traveller*™ system. Both of these adventures are written so that they can be used with no more rule books than the beginning set of three. Where the scenario requires more information or rules not covered in the first three *Traveller* books, all that is needed is included in the adventure itself.

The Argon Gambit is a planetside adventure that takes place in the Harlequin sub-sector of the Solomani Rim. As such, the history and politics of the Solomani play a significant part in the adventure. The planet, Janosz, is Balkanized and under Imperium control (more or less).

In this adventure you play one or more crew members of a freighter that is disabled and needs extensive repairs. Unfortunately, you have no money and in a month you will forfeit the ship as a ha-

zard to navigation. Your desperate situation attracts a rather self-confident patron who wants you to perform a "simple" burglary. After that, things get very complicated and extremely dangerous.

Argon Gambit is not a shoot-'em-up adventure. There is a definite mystery to solve (part of which is finding out what the mystery is). The booklet includes all that is needed to colorfully inform the players of what they need to find out and several interesting characters for them to deal with. The use of rumors as a source of information is extremely well handled.

Included at the end of the scenario is a lengthy history of the Solomani political and military system. This provides a good background for all the adventures that occur along the Rim of the remaining Solomani areas. Player characters can be used in place of those given with little trouble. *The Argon Gambit* can be completed in an evening by a sharp group of thinkers.

Death Station is a different sort of mystery adventure that occurs primarily in space. Again, any group of adventurers can play, or the characters given with the text can be used. This time, the mystery involves a research station that has sud-

denly stopped transmitting. The station is in orbit around Gadden, which is also located near the Solomani Rim in the Harlequin subsector.

When the party enters the station, they find it almost deserted. There are some immediate and obvious dangers to cope with, and a nicely laid-out mystery surrounding what happened to the station.

This adventure includes in it designs for a "Lab Ship" class of vehicle. This ship, 400 tons standard, is non-streamlined and contains very good laboratory facilities. It is capable of being armed. The detailed plans are enhanced by nine pages of explanation and information.

Death Station, too, can be completed in an evening by a sharp party. Again, there is a constant element of danger to add spice to the goings-on, while the players attempt to unravel a Sherlock Holmes-style mystery.

Both adventures are well balanced between action and the need to think your way out of a situation. Both have mysteries to solve and include more than adequate clues. The settings are colorful and well detailed and are entirely consistent with other adventures available from GDW. Both should be enjoyable challenges for *Traveller* players.

Fighting Ships Traveller Supplement 9

Reviewed by Tony Watson

The title for GDW's latest book of rules supplements for the *Traveller* game system is more than coincidentally similar to the name of that august volume, *Jane's Fighting Ships*. As Jane's details the navies and warships of the modern world, *Fighting Ships* does so for the starfleets of the Third Imperium.

Fighting Ships lists 25 different warships, ranging in size from a 20-ton gig to a massive half-million-ton Dreadnought. While these are the extremes, most of the ships are of great size, especially compared with the sorts of starcraft that player characters are likely to acquire. A handful of characters in a 100-ton Scout ship or a 200-ton Free Trader are going to be dwarfed by the 1,000-ton Destroyer Escorts and 17,700-ton Light Cruisers,

let alone the 75,000-ton Heavy Cruisers and 100,000-ton Fleet Carriers. These ships are *big*! Huge numbers of 50-ton weapons bays, triple turrets organized in batteries of ten, large numbers of small craft and crews that run into the hundreds and sometimes thousands: This book details the most powerful craft in the galaxy.

The designs in *Fighting Ships* are in accordance with Book 5, *High Guard*, and statistics and specifications are given in the code developed in that rules book. In addition, an accompanying text explains the purpose of each craft, comments on its quality and utility, and other particulars, such as construction time and cost. Lovers of the technical aspects of starships should have a fine time ogling the lists of weapons, jump drives and defenses.

Paul Jaquays has provided an illustration of just about every ship class described (making this the most illustrated work in the *Traveller* line). His work is nice, but it's unfortunate that W. H. Keith

wasn't used as the artist; his starship pictures in the *Journal of the Traveler's Aid Society* and various supplements have always been very good. Jaquays seems to be at his best when doing an illustration from someone else's design, such as the Mercenary Cruiser and Close Escort, both drawn from *The Journal*.

Fighting Ships makes very interesting reading for those of us enamored with spaceships and all that goes with them. However, one might raise the question of how useful all this information will be in a role-playing game. It is highly unlikely that any player character is going to acquire a ship of this great size and capability. And any time a character-owned starship came into conflict with one of these... well, the characters and their ship would become part of the solar wind in no time. The book is more useful as source material on the fleet of the Third Imperium, as well as providing a ready-made directory of warships for use with the *High Guard* rules or *Trillion Credit Squadron*.



Off the Shelf

Reviewed by Chris Henderson

Other Stories and...

THE ATTACK OF THE GIANT BABY

Kit Reed

Berkley Books 0-435-05032-7
\$2.95

Usually, there is not much one can learn from a review about a collection of short stories. Since collections are a risky business, they rarely appear unless they are a collection by a top author, or maybe sport three or four "name" authors amid the unknowns. Such is not the case with Kit Reed.

Although she has been writing since the '50s, her name is not one that everyone will recognize immediately. Her stories, however, are not hard to recognize. As a matter of fact, once you have read any three Kit Reed stories, you will probably have no trouble whatsoever in picking out another one.

Kit Reed has style; it is not the style one might expect, however. Certainly not after seeing the cover of *Giant Baby*. Anyone who sees this cover, with its humorous title and scene of happy-baby-destroys-New-York, will be fairly sure that it is luring them to a collection of funny little comedies.

Well, although it can be said that there are certain humorous aspects to some of Ms. Reed's stories, none of them are comedies. There is too much pain, too many bad memories per page for us to actually laugh at the characters within, or at their antics. The only chuckles which these stories might inspire are those bitter kinds of nasty titters one makes when they are remembering something painful which happened to them.

SHARRA'S EXILE

Marion Zimmer Bradley

DAW Books 0-87997-659-4
\$2.95

Marion Zimmer Bradley has written another Darkover novel. More and more, this news is becoming a cause for celebration among fantasy readers, because each Darkover novel seems to be better than the last one.

Over the years, Bradley has found herself with a problem. When she began writing the stories of Darkover, she started near the end of everything, solving the final problems of the society she had created. As the series' popularity grew, however, she began to write many of the novels as prequels, moving backward

But, often we laugh at pain as a way of easing old memories. (Go to a Woody Allen movie for a perfect example). When given a chance to laugh at our problems, most of us will do that rather than carry the burden around with us.



Kit Reed writes stories for people to laugh at in just such fashion. The story *Winner* is for anyone who has made a fool of themselves in the name of love. For those who have suffered through dieting and the vicious stares and ostracism

into the past, attempting to explain not how the problems were solved, but rather how they came about in the first place.

This, as Bradley readily admits in a prefacing note, set up an imbalance where the novels near the end of the series are of a poorer quality than those near the chronological beginning.

The poorest of all the Darkover tales has always been *The Sword of Aldones*. Not wanting to rewrite *Sword*, but knowing that something had to be done with it, she decided to write an entirely new book based on events in the same time frame. *Sharra's Exile* is that book.

To tell the story of the novel briefly would be a fool's quest. It is over 350 pages long and is one of the most tightly woven, character-heavy Darkover nov-

els of all. It is a complicated, devious, demanding tale of political game-playing, interplanetary advancement, forced marriages and social problems with a half-dozen different pairs of tragic lovers thrown in just to keep things interesting.

Many of the stories are for homemakers, or for women in general: Tales like *Songs of War*, *Cynosure*, and *In Behalf of the Product* all depict what it is like to be a woman in today's "liberated" world. They are not false stories; these are not the ranting, vengeful writings of a woman out to teach men just what they have and have not done, et cetera. Each story is entertaining with, maybe, a moral, but no preaching. They are more positively balanced in their approach than any stories from a feminist science-fiction or fantasy writer have ever been. She tops those authors who would teach us how to be good little interacting men and women by not bothering to try to teach us anything.

Her characters are men, women, monsters, intelligent vegetables, humorous Biblical characters and many more, interacting exactly the way people always have — bitterly, pettily, and cruelly, taking advantage of one another, plotting, manipulating, and, in general, acting like your parents, lovers, bosses, friends and everyone else you have ever known.

Other Stories and... The Attack of the Giant Baby is the best short story collection to be released this year. Outside of the too predictable *Empty Nest*, there is not a single dud in the bunch. Besides being entertaining and funny in spots, Kit Reed is a sensitive, direct writer who remembers the pain she has experienced and seen second-hand, and who knows how to share it with the rest of the world.

els of all. It is a complicated, devious, demanding tale of political game-playing, interplanetary advancement, forced marriages and social problems with a half-dozen different pairs of tragic lovers thrown in just to keep things interesting.

Basically, it is the tale of Lew Alton's return to grace. Alton (before the book begins) was part of a rebellion attempt which involved a powerful mental matrix named the Sharra Matrix. The rebellion failed; the matrix consumed his lover, and his hand, in a fire so destructive that his basic genetic pattern was disrupted from having been exposed to it.

We are constantly bombarded with how Alton feels about his lot in life. Not only does the narrator tell us through other characters what the world thinks of

him, but every other chapter is a part of Alton's diary (or something; the chapters are merely called "Lew Alton's Narrative." in which he constantly moans about his poor lot and how no one can love him, and why should they; he did this dumb thing, and that one, and he lost his hand, and his poor Marjorie, and he disappointed his father, and failed his brother, and, oh, what should he do . . . et cetera, ad infinitum.

Unfortunately, Lew Alton is a crybaby. There is no better word. He is self-pitying, unthinking, foolish and not very clever. Like most of the men in Bradley's novels, he cares in the end totally and only for himself. In truth, most of the people in the world in the end think only of themselves, and if the distribution was the same in the Darkover series it would not be so galling. The problem is that Bradley's men are always fairly inferior creatures and her women are always competent, moral, brave, warm, understanding and strong. This is an oversimplification, to be sure, but it is a statement which has rung more true with the release of each new Darkover novel.

Lew Alton is just not a very interesting hero. He rarely can decide the correct thing to do. He cannot look at facts and put them together correctly; he is stupid, untrained, arrogant, and boring.

This is not to say that the book is any of these things. Bradley unwraps her tale with her usual interesting style, taking the story from point to point in a nice (although somewhat slower than usual) fashion. The story-telling is good; it is the story told which is lacking.

Maybe there is not that much more to say about Darkover. Maybe the whole thing has gotten out of hand, or maybe this was not the right time for the book. Whatever the case, however, *Sharra's Exile* is not one of the best Darkover novels. Outside of Lew Alton, most of the characters are still compelling and vital; the language is as crisp as ever. And after all these years, no one could think to accuse Bradley of not understanding her setting. The sets for every scene are constructed with a deep knowledge of the cultures which built them.

The problem with the novel lies in Bradley's traditional misuse of her male characters, which in *Sharra's Exile* has reached new heights. In her other novels, even though her men were not gifted with all the most noble traits, at least they could get something done when the time came. Lew Alton cannot. He jumps from moment to moment, regretting his mistakes and constantly making more. He hides behind his father, his responsibilities, his pain, his deformity, and anything else he can scramble behind when the going gets rough. He isn't a coward; he will fight when threatened. He is just such a poor fighter that it's no fun to keep watching him get knocked down.

A sad tale too soon done

TOO LONG A SACRIFICE
Mildred Downey Broxon
Dell Fantasy 0-440-18603-X
\$2.50

Too Long a Sacrifice is the story of an Irish couple, living in the time of the fairy folk. Tadhg MacNiall was a bard of noble birth; his wife, Maire ni' Donnall, was a healer. Tadhg was too good at his chosen profession, however. The fairy people, the Sidhe, are so taken by his playing and singing that they enchant him. In the middle of the night, he leaves his home to sleep on a fairy mound. By the time his wife finds him, Tadhg is gone, and a changeling has been left in his place.

Maire is a strong woman, however, and will not abandon the man she loves to the fairies. She finds the means to join her husband under the enchanted lake he has been taken to, to play for the King and the Queen of the Sidhe.

But, although she has found the means to join him, she cannot free him from the enchantment. Finding she cannot take him away from them, she decides to stay with him in the enchanted land. Century after century slips away, until finally the surface world is our present one. The turmoil of the modern wars in Ireland soaks the land with blood and causes turbulent changes in the land of the Sidhe.

At this point, Maire and Tadhg are allowed to return to their own surface world. The Sidhe grant them special powers which will enable them to maneuver in the new Ireland above which awaits them.

On the way to the surface, however, the pair become separated; each reaches an opposite shore of the lake, and believes the other to be dead. Thus, Tadhg, the vengeful warrior-bard, and Maire, the gentle, strong-willed healer, find themselves in the strife-torn reality of the streets of modern Belfast, swept up in conflicts they can barely understand.

Too Long A Sacrifice is a grand, social fantasy, encompassing more than just the usual props of the genre. Broxon's characters move through the dark and pitiful world of religious violence and terrorism, neither of them able to comprehend the "why" of the misery which constantly surrounds them. This is not a novel of pain broken with happy events such as babies being born, birthdays, love affairs, and the like. It is a hard, unhappy and unsympathetic world, spotlighting the senselessness of today's Irish social strife.

It offers little in the way of patronizing explanations, refusing to reduce Ireland's present agonies to cheap entertainment and nothing else. Indeed, explanations



are not missed. The telling of the story takes the predominant role, leaving the answers to the present situation in Ireland to those who are more inclined to try to find them. The point Broxon is trying to make is that there are no answers; her Ireland is one caught in a suicidal madness; a dark terror of bombs and murderous street riots carefully planned for television cameras.

The only real fault the novel has is that it is over far too quickly. At the point where most readers will be comfortable with another hundred pages, the novel suddenly ends, wrapping up Tadhg and Maire's immediate problems, but condemning Ireland to years of further misery.

Truthfully, any other ending, considering the events reported on the nightly news, would be a bit simplistic, if not naive.

Although there is an abruptness to the ending, it is not the kind which leaves a reader feeling cheated. (At 251 pages, it is actually a longer novel than most fantasy novels out at present.) *Too Long A Sacrifice* is an excellent example of what modern fantasy can be when a writer really puts his/her mind to telling a worthwhile tale. And, any book whose only fault is that it is too short really does not have much wrong with it.

Despite the abrupt ending, this novel is too fine a blending of character and anger, as well as of fantasy and reality, to be ignored. *Too Long A Sacrifice* adds new dimensions to the fantasy genre.

WHEN TROUBLE BECKONS
Mike McQuay
 Bantam Books 0-553-20041-0
 \$2.25

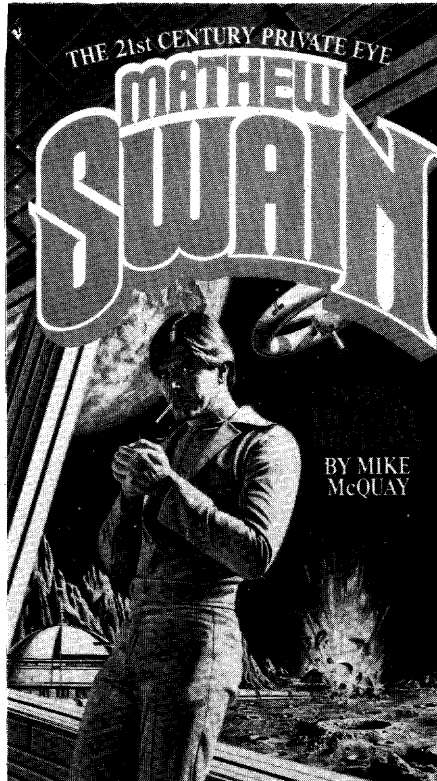
Raymond Chandler wrote of Los Angeles in the 1940's in a way no one has ever been able to duplicate. A number of writers have tried to steal his style; hundreds of cheap, stupid attempts have been made to tell detective stories in his manner. Almost every one of them has been a dismal failure.

The idea has been discussed more than once by science-fiction writers and their fans of taking that classic approach to the detective novel and combining it with futuristic settings and devices. There have been no real attempts until recently for one main reason — fear. No one has had the nerve to take on such a difficult task, especially one which would show failure so obviously. No one, that is, except Mike McQuay.

When Trouble Beckons, McQuay's newest novel, is a fierce, hard-bitten travel through a gritty, weary future. His detective, Mathew Swain, is a grim, realistic, but honest gumshoe who despises machinery built for no good reason, and fights against a future world drowning in its own sour paranoia.

Although McQuay does not fit into Chandler's mold precisely, he comes light years closer than any who have tried before. This passage is from the first book in the Swain series, *Hot Time In Old Town*:

"Midday whores, young ones who had to look good in the light of day, roamed the jungle paths looking for lunch money. Lean, tall studs in color-changing tunics and street parade hair, red as West Texas mud, prowled like panthers; their heads set firm, and their eyes watchful. Pack-hunting brown cubs with black, tangled manes and guts full of government dope leaned against the hulking ruins of dead brownstones and called with



primal elegance to those unfortunate enough to be passing by. It was Tuesday — garbage day."

There is power in his writing. Power and a style all his own, which owes its roots to the genre started by Chandler. Both *Hot Time In Old Town* and *When Trouble Beckons* are social science-fiction novels, which accomplish more than just the telling of a science-fiction tale or a detective story. They are filled with harsh, ugly predictions of what might be coming.

In McQuay's future, the world is a place where the police solve only those crimes which will bring a profit in to the department, where security guards are licensed to kill and no questions are asked.

It is the ultimate Chandler setting; it is a time when nobody, literally *nobody*,

cares about anything. Except, of course, for Mathew Swain, private eye.

In *When Trouble Beckons*, Swain receives an invitation from his sometimes-girlfriend to come to the moon. He can sense that there is something wrong with her, and so he accepts the invitation.

Once at the spaceport, however, he finds that someone on the moon has cancelled his reservation. He bullies his way onto the ship and then has to trick his way off it once he gets to the moon. Then he finds there are people who don't want him to get out of the spaceport and into the city area. Tricking his way into the city, he then has to sneak his way into the residential area and break into his girlfriend's home — only to find her in a coma, surrounded by cops who say she killed a man; more specifically, the man lying next to her on the floor with his scalp laid open.

The novel travels on in this fashion, with the readers learning about the Dickensian society which prevails on the moon at the same time Swain does. He must learn the rules of the society so that he can move about in it, one step ahead of the police. Everyone there is pale due to the lack of sunlight; he learns to use make-up to effect the same condition. Days have no meaning on the moon, only work periods; he learns to count hours.

It would be unfair to give away the intricate plot line of this novel. It is also unnecessary. What is more important is the author's work as a totality.

The mistake often made by those attempting to write in this style is that they will use the hard-bitten detective/narrator dialogue to expound openly on large philosophical points, or the metaphysical side of everyday life. They talk of man's inhumanity, or greater good, quoting everyone from the Bible to Freud.

What Chandler used to do was let Philip Marlowe talk about booze, broads, dirty streets, and dirtier cops; by rambling on only about things in everyday life, he forced his readers to draw the psychological and philosophical conclusions for themselves.

McQuay knows how to do this quite well. And, not to talk about *When Trouble Beckons* only with regard to how it stacks up to *The Big Sleep* or *Farewell, My Lovely*, let me close by saying that it is quite a good book in its own right. It owes points to the past, granted, but it also gives the genre new things; it blends science and a dim future picture very well, setting Mathew Swain down in the center of it. By rights, Swain could not possibly be a product of the society he lives in — which is what makes him a necessary part of it. It also makes it a pleasure to follow his adventures.

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A holiday gift guide

'Tis the season to be reading...

Reviews by Chris Henderson

Every year it happens: You go to bed on a summer night, and somehow when you wake up, you discover that Christmas is just around the corner. You then begin to fret because, like all of your other fantasy-minded friends, you don't know what to get for everyone on your shopping list. Mom and Dad are fairly easy, but after that, it usually becomes increasingly more difficult as you try to match something "just right" with each name.

Luckily, with science fiction and fantasy becoming more and more popular, the gift possibilities are more abundant than they used to be. This is just as true for books as it is for other types of merchandise.

The grouping of suggested holiday gifts given below varies in price, type and area of interest, just as the people on our lists are varied. (And don't forget: You ought to buy yourself a present, too.)

The first suggestion is a stocking stuffed with new paperback releases. There are a great number of excellent titles on the stands now, but among them are nine which should not be missed.

For horror fans, Pocket Books offers Ramsey Campbell's *The Parasite* (also out in hardback from Macmillan). The theme of reborn evil and possessed children seems overused and commercial these days, but not in this case. Campbell is a master, and this is one of his best. Also, DAW Books has just released

Blood Country, the only good vampires-in-the-modern-world novel I have ever read. Also in the horror category, there is *The City of the Singing Flame*, which is much more than mere horror. This one has been released by Pocket Books under its "Timescape" banner. It is the first in a series of Clark Ashton Smith collections scheduled for release over the next year. Long out of print, or only available in costly collector's editions, this volume of short lyrical stories is a top-notch gathering of Smith's bizarre, alien fantasies. Both horrific and imaginative, these stories will be welcomed by fans of R. E. Howard, H. P. Lovecraft, and anyone else with strong wills and knees.

For fans of pure fantasy, DAW Books has finally released Andre Norton's newest Witch World book, an excellent novel called *Horn Crown*. In this one, Norton finally tells the story of the first coming of mankind, thus setting the stage for the entire series.

Another excellent new novel is Adam Corby's *The Former King*, released by Pocket Books. It is a tale of the uniting of barbarian tribes in an attempt to build a new world out of an old one's fallen ashes, and it's worth the price just for the cover art alone.

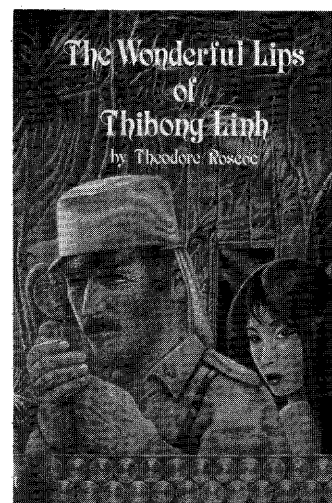
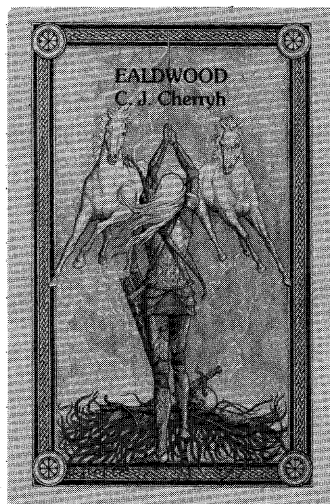
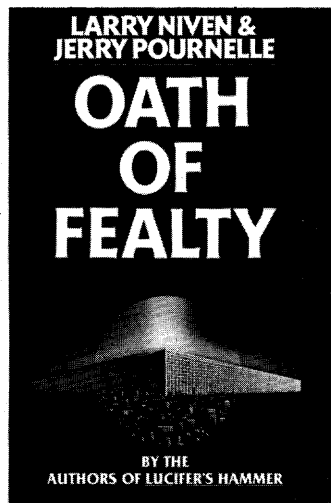
Finally, wrapping up the paperback selections briefly, are four highly recommended sci-fi works. Ace Books has just released another Charles Sheffield collection, *Hidden Variables*. Be warned, this one is for the hard science fans. Secondly, Fred Pohl & C. M. Kornbluth's 1952 classic, *The Space Merchants*, has been reissued by Del Rey Books. This is

a sci-fi/fantasy tale dealing with the advertising business. It is a bitter, hard, cynical, fantastically funny book. Get it for someone who watches a lot of TV.

Any SF fan will appreciate the amusing and yet touching *City of Bamboo*, the prequel of Barry B. Longyear's other comic smash hit, *Circus World*. (If you can find a copy of that one on the stands, stuff it in the stocking as well.) And lastly, Pocket Books has published a touchingly haunting novel entitled *Starship & Haiku*. This Japanese science fiction is possibly the best original paperback release of 1981. It is surprising that an American company had the vision to put it on the stands, for it is different from everything published in this country in the genre in the past fifty years.

There are two new trade paperback editions also worthy as Christmas gifts this season. Continuum Publishing has just released *The Cosmic Carnival of Stanislaw Lem*. It is a sampler package of Lem, for those not familiar with him, guaranteed to turn them into dedicated fans. The second is *Distant Stars*, from Bantam Books, an illustrated volume containing seven of Samuel Delany's most interesting pieces. Each of the stories is illustrated by a different artist.

The three best limited-edition publishing houses all have interesting offerings for the holiday. Arkham House is offering *Tales From the Nightside*, a brilliant collection of fifteen Charles L. Grant stories. This hardback volume has a foreword by Stephen King, is illustrated by Andrew Smith, and is completely horrifying from cover to cover.



Another beautiful new limited edition comes from Underwood/Miller. This is Roger Zelazny's **The Changing Land**. Limited to 1,000 copies, it is illustrated by Thomas Canty. One of Zelazny's better recent works, *The Changing Land* is an exciting, colorful sword-and-sorcery tale, filled with all of the usual Zelazny touches, well worth anyone's time.

No report on collector's editions would be complete without the latest word on what Donald Grant is doing. The word is, Don Grant is doing plenty.

One of the things he is most noted for is helping the American fantasy public to rediscover some of its better, forgotten writers of the past. One such man is pulp writer Theodore Roscoe. Grant has taken three of his best tales (including a novelette of his most famous continuing character, Legionnaire Thibaut Corday) and put them into an illustrated hardback, **The Wonderful Lips of Thibong Linh**. Each story is an interesting collection of characters and places, interwoven into a first-person narrative which was Roscoe's finest style. They are all stories of man's greed and the way nature will turn that greed against him. It is a volume well worth owning.

Another such is **Ealdwood**, written by C. J. Cherryh and illustrated by her brother, David A. Cherry. It is a soft fantasy novel, the tale of the last elf and her interaction with humans and Lord Death. Limited to 1,000 copies, it is signed by the author and the artist. *Ealdwood* is a must for Cherryh fans; if you know one, this is the ideal gift.

And the ideal gift for the Robert E. Howard fans on your list would be Grant's **The Lord of the Dead**, which collects together Howard's tales of detective Steve Harrison and his battles with the Oriental manace of the diabolical Erlik Kahn. Also illustrated, this volume is just one of Grant's many fine volumes of collected works of R. E. Howard.

The only unfortunate part of the collector's pieces mentioned is that they can sometimes be hard to find. Unless your town has a specialty bookstore, you will have to send to the publishers for the books you want. Send SASE and a request for a catalogue to:

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In the field of recent mass-market hardbacks, two volumes leap to the forefront. The first is **Whispers III** from Doubleday. Once again, editor Stuart David Schiff has culled the very best from recent issues of his own magazine to give

us his third collection of the absolute best in fantasy and horror. As always, only the tops in the field (Campbell, Leiber, Nolan, Zelazny, Etchison, etc.) are present. It is a gripping, shocking, excellent collection.

The latest joint effort by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle is **Oath of Fealty**, recently released by Timescape Books' hardcover branch. It is a little less exotic than most of their team ventures, but just as exciting. Bob Heinlein calls it "...possibly the finest science fiction novel I have ever read," which seems to me a tad excessive, but nonetheless it is a gripping story. The tale is of Todos Santos, a private city contained within a single building on the ruins of a Los Angeles ghetto burned by rioters. Inside, a new utopia seems to be rising, but it is a parasitic one, and it is resented by the citizens of what is left of Los Angeles.

While the book may not be the best of all the end-of-the-world novels of recent vintage, it is certainly near the top—and a sure bet for success as a Christmas gift.

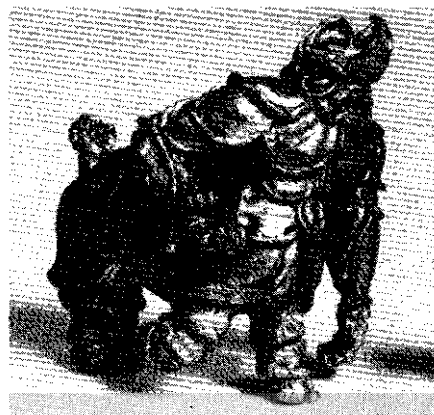
A slightly different entry in the holiday grab bag comes to us from the Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., people: **The Annotated Gulliver's Travels** by Jonathan Swift, edited and annotated by Isaac Asimov.

Not one word of the original work has been censored, as has been the case with some editions in the past. Asimov has done a thorough job of explaining every detail, even the confusing ones, from the manuscript. Added to his notations are more than 100 black-and-white illustrations. It is an impressive, coffee-table-sized book. For anyone of sufficient intellect to enjoy the novel (a task made easier by the good doctor's notes), it should make a perfect gift.

Intentionally last, but far from least, in this look at holiday books is **The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy**. This is a wildly funny, insane comedy from England, written by Doug Adams. It has had numerous printings in that country and now, after a successful hardback release in the U.S., the book is finally in paperback here as well.

In England, Adams started a BBC radio comedy after a hitch as a scriptwriter for Monty Python's Flying Circus. The *Guide* was so well received on radio that he wrote the continuing script up in book form. Next came a record album, a television series and finally a stage show. National Public Radio has brought over the radio show, leaving many people hoping that the TV show will follow shortly. Until then, we have the book — and it's at the top of this year's Christmas gift list.

If the people on your gift list are readers, there ought to be something mentioned here for each of them. Sure beats a box of chocolates, a new tie, or a pen-and-pencil set....



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SIMULATION CORNER

by John Prados

Practicing Game Design V: On philosophy

In the four previous segments of this series, *Simulation Corner* discussed practical methods of making a game. The idea was to have a detailed but non-technical discussion that could apply to all types of games. There was discussion of a method of zeroing in on a game subject, and of building a model for game action. Some of the columns proposed ground rules for achieving "realism" or "state of the art" in design work. All of these built toward developing a theory of game design. But a prospective designer should not only know "the book," he should think about when to throw "the book" away. It is this use of judgement that demonstrates the degree of quality inherent in a given game design. The designer's use of judgement in given problem-solving situations also leads eventually to his development of a more or less coherent "philosophy" of design. In this wrap-up segment of "Practicing Game Design," *Simulation Corner* turns to a discussion of design philosophy.

This series has been based on the experience of professional game designers drawn from three main sources. One of these has been the interviews and other commentary in the hobby press. Another source has been my own experience. The third source is extensive commentary by a panel of noted designers who were specifically asked to talk about these design issues. This panel was composed of Jay Nelson, formerly of OSG and SPI; Stephen Newberg, of Simulations Canada; and Jack Greene of Quarterdeck Games.

Jay was no doubt engaging in black humor when he replied that his design philosophy is "?," but Jack Greene was also short and to the point: "moderate dimensions; three hour games with personality and flavor; interesting situations that allow decisions to be made."

Jack's basic recipe is all there. He evidently wants games of moderate complexity, with enough innovation, realism, and meat in the game system to give "personality and flavor." Note that he also wants interesting situations "that allow decisions to be made." Clearly this is a reasonable position for a professional

designer concerned with reaching the widest possible audience with his system. He goes for moderate complexity because he knows that most veteran gamers will be satisfied neither with the familiar mechanics of *Napoleon at Waterloo* nor with the esoterica of *Campaign for North Africa*. Jack seeks interesting situations because he suspects these lead hobbyists to look at his game, and select it from among the constant stream of new game products in the marketplace. The three-hour limit suggests a game that can be played in a reasonable amount of time.

What could make a game with all the characteristics Jack Greene wants, at least from the design standpoint? The short answer is (that old bugaboo) "playability." What is remarkable is the extent to which designers recognize the worth of "playability" despite the recurrent and often heated debate over realism in games. For example, Marc Miller of GDW tells an interviewer, "Sure, I go for playability," when asked about his philosophy of design. Alan Moon of Avalon Hill, who considers himself very much a playability "freak," asked the same question of AH designer Frank Davis, only to be met with the following caution:

Realism versus playability is a misnomer. The real issue is simplicity versus complexity, neither of which ensures realism or playability. The designer who stresses

simplicity has no guarantee the game will turn out playable, unless he pays attention to making the rules complete and intelligible. And the designer who attempts to design a complex game will not produce a more realistic game unless he first ascertains what were the crucial aspects of the period. Many times complexity added to the game detracts from it.

The General, Sept., 1980, p. 27)

Given the desire for playability and the dangers to which Frank points, designers have adopted a variety of devices for preserving the aspect of interest in their games. Marc Miller uses a technique he calls "counter dynamics." In this method he finds reasons to distinguish among the forces modeled in the game, upgrading some and downgrading others so that "units" are no longer freely interchangeable. "It makes people pay more attention to the units they have under their fingertips," says Marc.

For his part, panelist Stephen Newberg focuses on game mechanics rather than the forces at play:

"I want to give a very well-defined viewpoint on the events to players. This means designing the systems to give the information and decision capabilities for the level of individual that the player-view is representing. This opens the design in some ways and limits it in others."



In effect the Newberg approach uses "player-view" as a criterion for inclusion in the game design, an interesting device.

Another prominent designer, John Hill, who recently did *Battle for Stalingrad* (SPI), uses an approach he calls "designing for effect." Here the philosophy is that the game mechanics don't matter as long as the designer achieves the "effect" he desires from the game.

What is clear from all this is that there are many different approaches to capturing interest and drawing the gamer into a design. But, again in the words of Frank Davis, "I don't think any designer can afford to ignore playability and pursue realism. If a game is unplayable there is no way to determine if the game is historically accurate."

Here, as everywhere else in game design, the designer is faced with a series of trade-offs of the different values he can represent in a game. As a prospective designer, you should never forget that the choices are **always** subjective, whether the question is quantification of combat units or what level of magic-incantation ability should be allowed to incapacitate a victim. One of the main reasons a design "philosophy" is useful is that it offers the designer a more or less coherent base upon which to approach the subjective choices that must be made in the course of elaborating a new game system.

With reference to specifically historical games, philosophy can also be used as a tool to decide what kinds of game projects are most desirable or feasible. Stephen Newberg has some thoughts along these lines from which many designers could benefit:

"On the strategic scale a lot can happen and the design should not require that history is faithfully duplicated in exactness, but at the same time cannot allow events far outside the range of reasonable possibility. For an operational game level, historic capabilities and limitations should be faithfully duplicated and then the players left in the position of the field commander, with the option of exploring those abilities and limits within an historic context. This level, I feel, offers the best possibilities for blending accuracy, feel, and playability. Tactical designs must, by scale definition, be very accurate. They place the player in the position of a lower level commander and should limit his abilities to demonstrate this level. Being that such designs are in many ways studies of weapons relationships, they tend to make poor games, since victory will revolve around shooting up the other guy and not getting shot up in return."

Stephen concedes that this is pretty rambling as a design philosophy, but the real point is his association of the level of representation of a game design with how difficult it may be to secure the

player's interest. It is quite possible that operational-level games do hold potential in this regard. In particular, some types of game mechanics in this level of game remain poorly explored even today.

Perhaps by now you're convinced that a design philosophy might be a useful thing to have. A philosophy on game-development questions is also vitally important, since the design work on a game is only partly finished when it first arrives at the prototype stage. Much like the important design questions that have been discussed in the last four segments of this series, there are important questions involved in game development which are discussed even less often than the design end of the enterprise.

Should a designer play his own game with testers? My personal feeling is that he should, because this is the only way a designer can become intimately familiar with the intricacies of the system he is creating. Other designers disagree and maintain that a designer who plays his own material becomes excessively involved in matters of game outcomes rather than the system.

Then there is the related question of whether the game prototype should always be played by testers in person. Should there be blind testing or not? Again, opinions differ. Opinions even

differ, as shown recently by the debate in the pages of *Fire and Movement* magazine, on whether having a developer for a game is worthwhile at all. This question may be altogether moot: As Stephen Newberg in fact noted to an *F&M* interviewer in 1980, "I think most of the best developers are no longer active in the field, and the best job is now done by those designers who change hats and develop their own games."

Having said so much about the need for coherent philosophies of game design and development, it must be noted that establishing such a "world view" is exceedingly difficult. There is no substitute for practical experience in confronting the problems involved in designing a game. Only constant exposure to such practical problems sensitizes the designer to many of the ambiguities, assumptions and gaps in knowledge that are papered over by the models we call games over which gamers aspire to spend hours of enjoyment. However, even the longest journey begins with a single step. Simulation Corner has proposed stages of design and a set of ground rules for designing that should at least give the prospective game designer a point of departure for a new kind of adventure, creating adventure games for others. Now it's back to the drawing board.

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Songs

(Continued from page 11)

tion of magical bardic instruments, both of which are plausible. The first is to use the instruments exactly as they are given in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*, arguing that they were created by druids for bards and thus contain druidic magic.

The second view is that bards can create their own magical instruments, at least for the five lower colleges. If you choose this view, you should generate randomly, for each instrument found, three Songs from the Song chart of the appropriate level to determine just which ones its creator chose to implant in it. This view seems more plausible, and it adds excitement to the game as the bard wonders just what powers his new magic instrument has. These three new Songs are intended to replace the druidic powers each instrument carries; those powers which are common to all bard instruments (levitation, flying, invisibility, Protection From Evil, 10'r., and added chance to charm) should not be changed, nor should any of the implanted powers duplicate them.

Carrying the above idea further, the question arises as to when and how may bards manufacture such instruments. The rule for when a bard can create a magical instrument is that he must have

reached the highest level in a college at least two above that of the instrument to be made. For example, to make a Fochlucan Bandore a bard must be 10th level or higher, while to create a Cli Lyre requires a bard of 22nd level. Anstruth and Ollamh Harps require a Magna Alumnae and a druid of the 12th (or higher) level.

The time needed to construct and enchant an instrument is a minimum of 6 months plus 1-6 months for every college above Fochlucan the instrument is to be. This includes the research time and the actual construction of the instrument by the bard's own hands. Materials, which will include the finest woods, custom-made strings of silver or other precious metals, and perhaps ivory or gem inlays, should cost a minimum of 5,000gp per college, more if the DM feels that such items are unusually hard to come by. Throughout this whole manufacturing process, the bard must devote himself totally to the task at hand.

The ideas put forth in this article are merely suggestions; DMs should feel free to use whatever portions they find useful. Care must be taken not to upset the delicate balance between abilities and restrictions of the character classes; this danger is exceptionally great when dealing with a mixture of abilities, such as with the bard.

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Sage Advice

(Continued from page 10)

Do ex-fighters (such as bards) keep their exceptional strength when they become a member of another class?

No. For bards, this is a case of giving up something to get something else: No character who is not an actual member of the fighter class can have exceptional strength. But when the ex-fighter becomes a bard, he does gain many benefits which are designed to make up for the prohibition on keeping his exceptional strength. The Players Handbook list 18 — not 18/01, or any other higher number—as the maximum strength possible for all non-fighter characters. As soon as a bard-to-be switches to the thief class, the character becomes a non-fighter. And although there will come a time when the bard-to-be regains the ability to use the skills he had as a fighter, he will never again be a fighter.

* * *

What are the maximum fighting and thieving levels of bards? How do you determine druid level for spell-casting ability for a bard?

Does a bard of 7th level or higher possess the druidic ability of shape-shifting?

Unless something sneaky is hidden in these questions that the sage isn't picking up on, they are all clearly answered by the description of the bard class in the Players Handbook:

The maximum fighting level of a bard is 5th, 6th or 7th, depending on how far the character progressed in the fighter class before switching to thief. The maximum thieving level of a bard is 6th, 7th or 8th level, depending on when the character chooses to leave the thief profession and enter the next stage of training as a bard.

A bard is able to use druidic spells according to the chart which is part of Bards Table I: One first-level druidic spell at first level, two first-level spells at second level, and so on. It is also clearly stated that a bard "gains druidic powers as a druid of the same level," with the exception of the spells usable per level. These druidic powers include the identification, movement and language skills which begin at 3rd level, plus the immunity to certain forms of charms and the shape-shifting power which is first acquired at 7th level.

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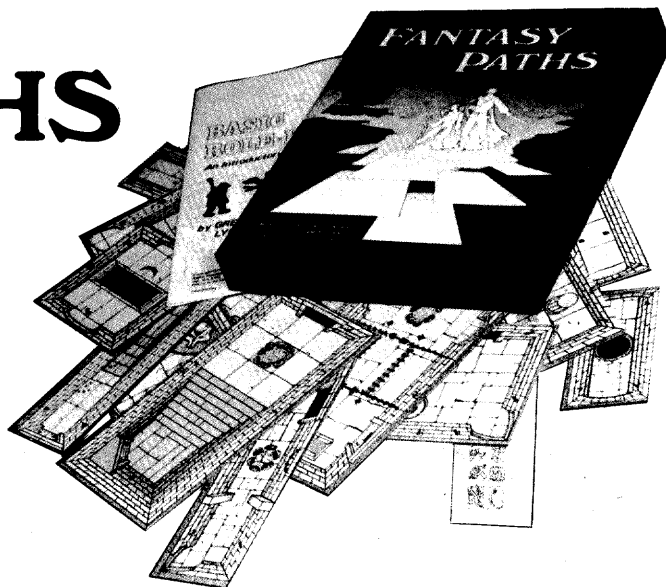
Is the original bard class, as printed in Best of The Dragon, or the bard class from the Players Handbook, supposed to be used for a player character? The earlier version of the bard indicates dwarves, halflings and elves can be bards, while the Players Handbook says only humans and half-elves can be bards. In the article from Best of The Dragon, bards have magic-user spells. In the PH, they have druid spells. Which is right?

The original appearance of the article on bards was 'way back in the sixth issue of *The Strategic Review*, the predecessor of DRAGON™ magazine, and was printed before the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules came into existence. As such, the original bard class could possibly be best employed in a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® campaign, because this is the game for which it was developed. However, a bard player character which is going to be used in an AD&D™ campaign should be built around the rules given in the Players Handbook, which was published more than three years after the original appearance of the bard article. To make the "new bard" fit into the rest of the AD&D framework, many particulars in the original description of the class were altered. The result is a bard class that is more "right" than the first presentation — at least for the players who intend to use the character in AD&D adventuring.

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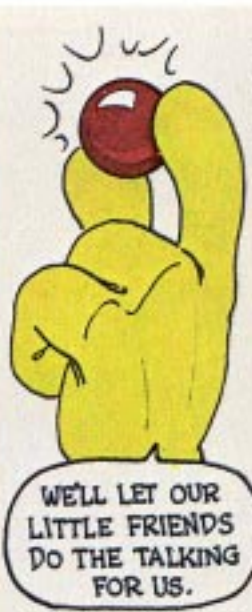
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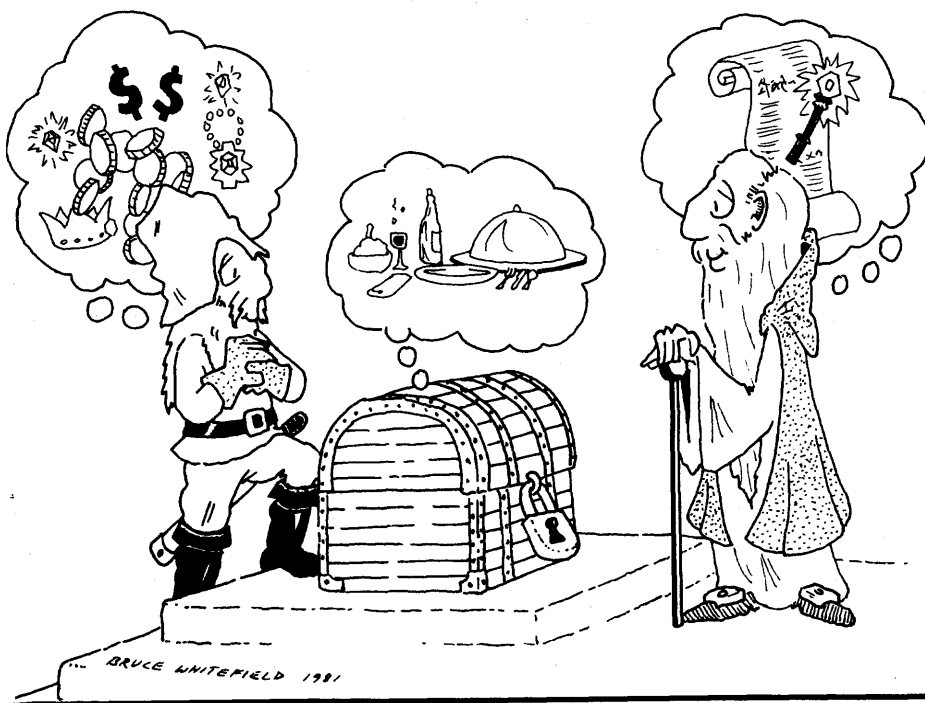
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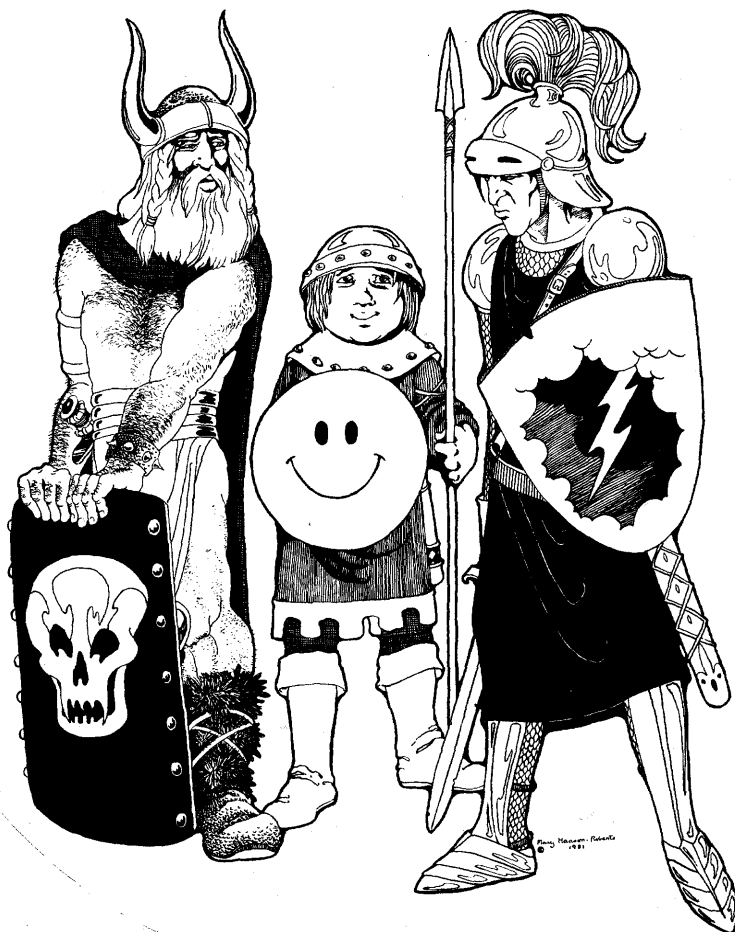
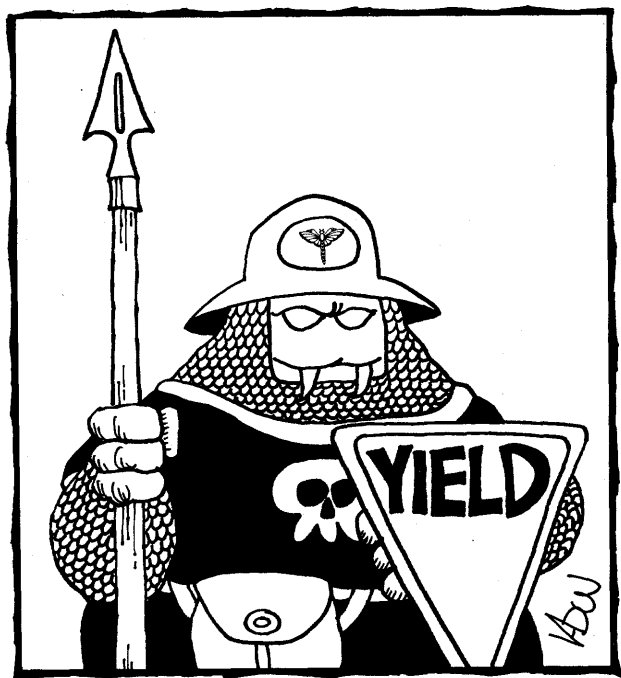








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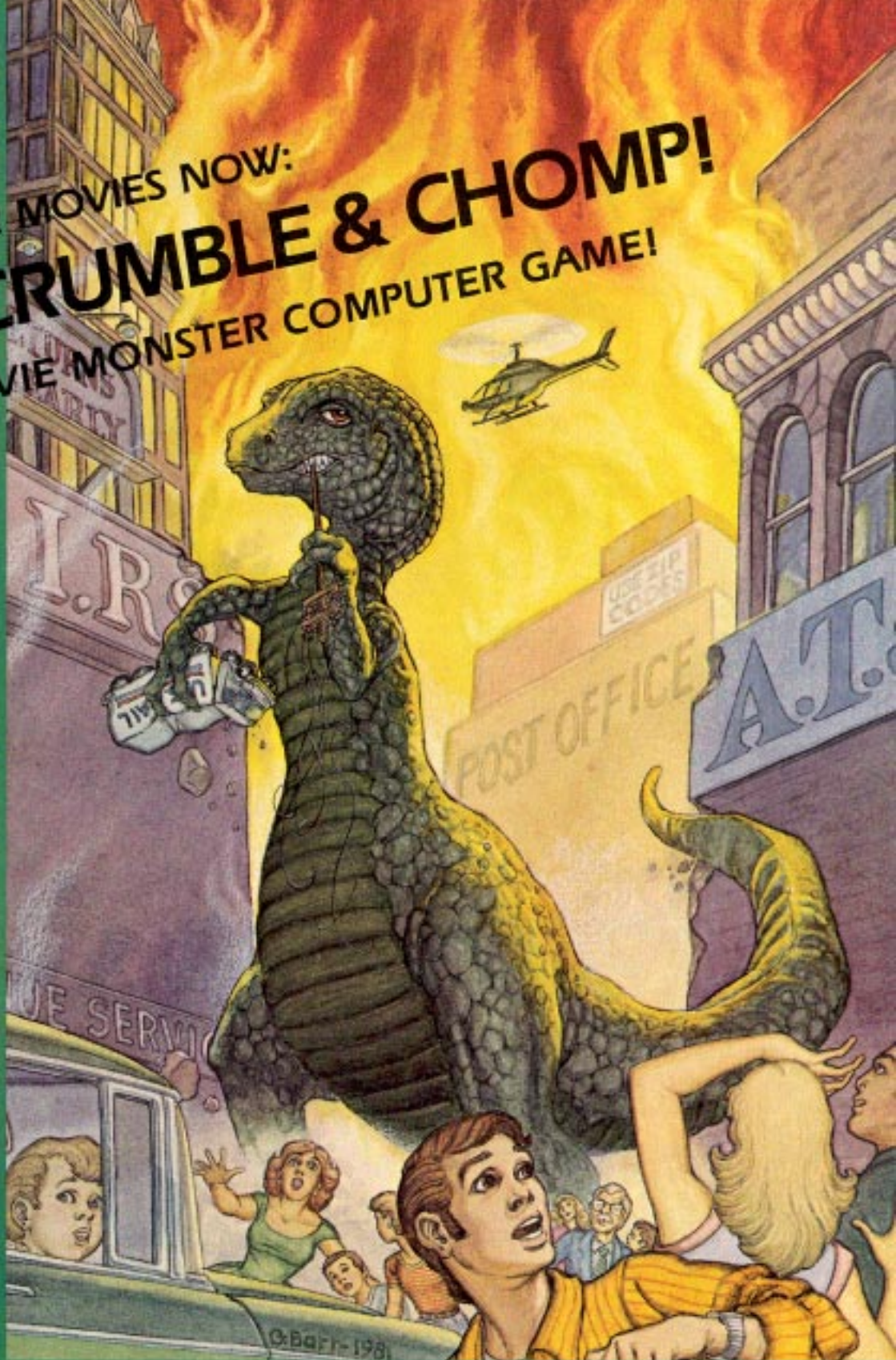
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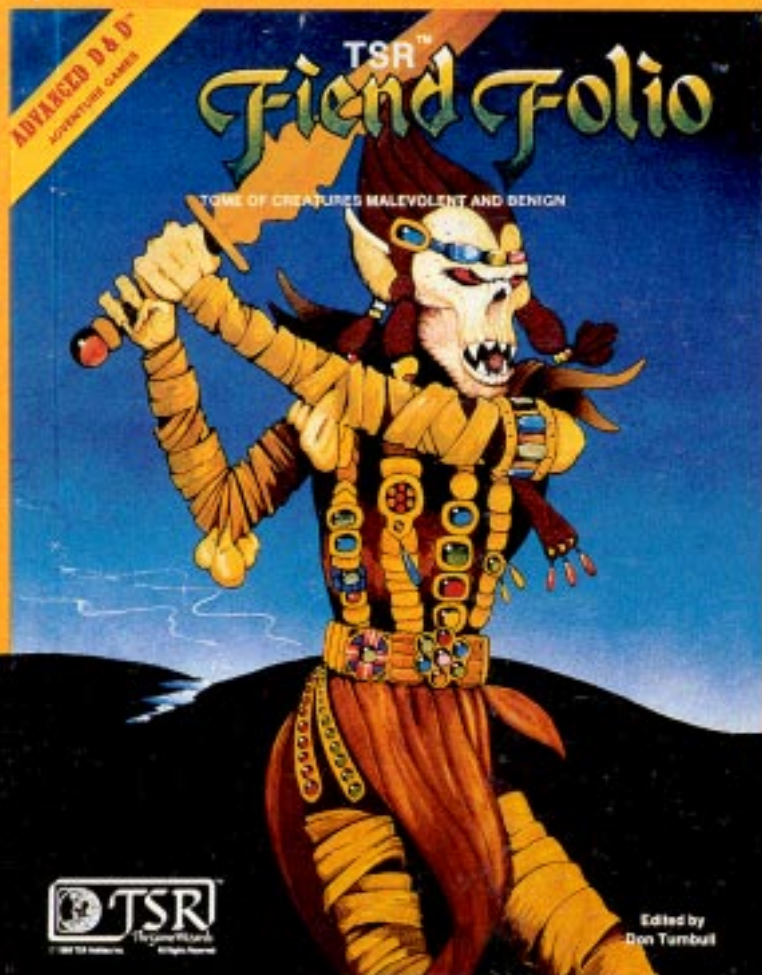
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